



Third Session – Forty-Third Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba
DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS

**Official Report
(Hansard)**

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The Honourable Tom Lindsey
Speaker*



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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Forty-Third Legislature

Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
ASAGWARA, Uzoma, Hon.	Union Station	NDP
BALCAEN, Wayne	Brandon West	PC
BEREZA, Jeff	Portage la Prairie	PC
BLASHKO, Tyler	Lagimodière	NDP
BRAR, Diljeet	Burrows	NDP
BUSHIE, Ian, Hon.	Keewatinook	NDP
BYRAM, Jodie	Agassiz	PC
CABLE, Renée, Hon.	Southdale	NDP
CHEN, Jennifer	Fort Richmond	NDP
COMPTON, Carla	Tuxedo	NDP
COOK, Kathleen	Roblin	PC
CORBETT, Shannon	Transcona	NDP
CROSS, Billie	Seine River	NDP
DELA CRUZ, Jelynn	Radisson	NDP
DEVGAN, JD	McPhillips	NDP
EWASKO, Wayne	Lac du Bonnet	PC
FONTAINE, Nahanni, Hon.	St. Johns	NDP
GOERTZEN, Kelvin	Steinbach	PC
GUENTER, Josh	Borderland	PC
HIEBERT, Carrie	Morden-Winkler	PC
JOHNSON, Derek	Interlake-Gimli	PC
KENNEDY, Nellie, Hon.	Assiniboia	NDP
KHAN, Obby	Fort Whyte	PC
KINEW, Wab, Hon.	Fort Rouge	NDP
KING, Trevor	Lakeside	PC
KOSTYSHYN, Ron, Hon.	Dauphin	NDP
LAGASSÉ, Bob	Dawson Trail	PC
LAMOUREUX, Cindy	Tyndall Park	Lib.
LATHLIN, Amanda	The Pas-Kameesak	NDP
LINDSEY, Tom, Hon.	Flin Flon	NDP
LOISELLE, Robert	St. Boniface	NDP
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MARCELINO, Malaya, Hon.	Notre Dame	NDP
MOROZ, Mike, Hon.	River Heights	NDP
MOSES, Jamie, Hon.	St. Vital	NDP
MOYES, Mike, Hon.	Riel	NDP
NARTH, Konrad	La Vérendrye	PC
NAYLOR, Lisa, Hon.	Wolseley	NDP
NESBITT, Greg	Riding Mountain	PC
OXENHAM, Logan	Kirkfield Park	NDP
PANKRATZ, David	Waverley	NDP
PERCHOTTE, Richard	Selkirk	PC
PIWNIUK, Doyle	Turtle Mountain	PC
REDHEAD, Eric	Thompson	NDP
ROBBINS, Colleen	Spruce Woods	PC
SALA, Adrien, Hon.	St. James	NDP
SANDHU, Mintu, Hon.	The Maples	NDP
SCHMIDT, Tracy, Hon.	Rossmere	NDP
SCHOTT, Rachelle	Kildonan-River East	NDP
SCHULER, Ron	Springfield-Ritchot	PC
SIMARD, Glen, Hon.	Brandon East	NDP
SMITH, Bernadette, Hon.	Point Douglas	NDP
STONE, Lauren	Midland	PC
WASYLIW, Mark	Fort Garry	Ind.
WHARTON, Jeff	Red River North	PC
WIEBE, Matt, Hon.	Concordia	NDP
WOWCHUK, Rick	Swan River	PC

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, November 24, 2025

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

The Speaker: O Eternal and Almighty God, from Whom all power and wisdom come, we are assembled here before Thee to frame such laws as may tend to the welfare and prosperity of our province. Grant, O merciful God, we pray Thee, that we may only desire that which is in accordance with Thy will, that we may seek it with wisdom and know it with certainty and accomplish it perfectly for the glory and honour of Thy name and for the welfare of all our people. Amen.

We acknowledge we are gathered on Treaty 1 territory and that Manitoba is located on the treaty territories and ancestral lands of the Anishinaabeg, Anishinewuk, Dakota Oyate, Denesuline, Nehethowuk nations. We acknowledge Manitoba is located on the Homeland of the Red River Métis. We acknowledge northern Manitoba includes lands that were and are the ancestral lands of the Inuit. We respect the spirit and intent of treaties and treaty making and remain committed to working in partnership with First Nations, Inuit and Métis people in the spirit of truth, reconciliation and collaboration.

Please be seated.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 3—The Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Amendment Act

Hon. Matt Wiebe (Minister responsible for the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation): I move, seconded by the minister responsible for Public Service Delivery, that Bill 3, The Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Amendment Act, be now read for a first time.

Motion presented.

Mr. Wiebe: I'm pleased to present The Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Amendment Act, which will preserve MPI's current insurance model, one that has delivered affordable rates to Manitobans for many years.

MPI's current DSR scale awards drivers with positive safety ratings with discounts on their insurance, and the higher they are, the larger the discount. This is what we call the registered owner model. It's based

on the principles of public insurance, which include universally available insurance, a simple rating system and one that encourages road safety and affordability.

This is in contrast with the primary driver model, which is commonly used in private insurance jurisdictions, and would have significant impacts in Manitoba, negatively affecting the affordability of insurance for many.

The bill will enshrine the existing registered owner model in the act, leaving government in control of the rating model and the PUB retaining sole jurisdiction over the rates and discounts associated with each level on the DSR scale.

I'm happy to introduce this bill for first reading.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

The Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion? [*Agreed*]

The motion is accordingly carried.

Bill 209—The Manitoba Hydro Amendment Act (Net-Metering Agreements)

Mr. Derek Johnson (Interlake-Gimli): I move, seconded by the MLA for Midland, that Bill 209, The Manitoba Hydro Amendment Act (Net-Metering Agreements), be now read a first time.

Motion presented.

Mr. Johnson: This act is amended to allow residential customers who operate a solar 'photovoltaic' system to request Manitoba Hydro to enter into a net-metering agreement. Manitoba Hydro must enter into the agreement if the customer's solar PV system meets the requirements set out in regulations, the customer has the necessary permits and the system is not likely to cause a serious adverse impact.

The person who wishes to install a solar PV system can request Manitoba Hydro to approve the proposed system for the purpose of a net-metering agreement. If Manitoba Hydro approves the proposed system and the customer installs the system within six months, Manitoba Hydro must enter into a net-metering agreement with the customer.

Under the net-metering agreement, the customer supplies electricity generated by the solar PV system to Manitoba Hydro, and Manitoba Hydro must award

the customer credit measured in kilowatt hours, rather than cash. This is equal to the difference between the amount of electricity the consumer produces and consumed in a billing period. The credit must be applied to the customer's future bill, but has no monetary value.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

The Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion? *[Agreed]*

The motion is accordingly passed.

Bill 208—The Retail Sales Tax Amendment Act (Farmer's Identification Number)

Mrs. Carrie Hiebert (Morden-Winkler): Honourable Speaker, I move that Bill 208, The Retail Sales Tax Amendment Act—*[interjection]* Sorry—oh, sorry—okay, sorry—I move, seconded by Fort Whyte, that The Retail Sales Tax Amendment Act (Farmer's Identification Number), be read a first time.

The Speaker: It's been moved by the honourable member for Morden-Winkler, seconded by the honourable member for Fort Whyte (Mr. Khan), that Bill 208, The Retail Sales Tax Amendment Act (Farmer's Identification Number), be now read a first time.

Mrs. Hiebert: The retail sales tax amended to enable the person engaging in farming to obtain a farmer's identification number. A person who provides the farmer identification number is not required to pay the tax on products and services that are exempt when using in farming. The person must provide a declaration respecting their use of the tax exemption products or services in farming. A consequential amendment is made to the tax administration and mislabeled tax act.

This bill replaces the requirement for agricultural retailers to obtain a wet signature for every purchase by a farmer of products that were not clearly marked.

The Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion? *[Agreed]*

The motion is accordingly passed.

Bill 212—The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Stalking-Related Measures)

Mr. Richard Perchotte (Selkirk): I move, seconded by the MLA for Lakeside, that Bill 212, the highway traffic amended act, stalking-related measures, now be read a first time.

The Speaker: It's been moved by the honourable member for Selkirk, seconded by the honourable member for Lakeside (Mr. King), that Bill 212, The Highway Traffic

Amendment Act (Stalking-Related Measures), be now read a first time.

* (13:40)

Mr. Perchotte: Bill 212, with unanimous and non-partisan support, this bill will provide additional protection of victims of violence, taking away the ability of stalkers to track and follow their victims. By suspending driver licences or impounding vehicles, we'll help keep our loved ones, neighbours, friends and fellow Manitobans safe.

I look forward to all of us coming together to make a stand against intimate partner violence.

The Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion? *[Agreed]*

The motion is accordingly passed.

Bill 222—The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Speed Limits on Provincial Roads)

Mr. Konrad Narth (La Vérendrye): I move, seconded by the member for Lakeside (Mr. King), that Bill 222, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Speed Limits on Provincial Roads), be now read a first time.

Motion presented.

Mr. Narth: I am pleased to rise today and introduce Bill 222, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Speed Limits on Provincial Roads). Over the years, community growth has outpaced regulatory process. This common sense piece of legislation, supported by the Association of Manitoba Municipalities, will help to resolve the disconnect.

With this bill, The Highway Traffic Act is amended to enable a local traffic authority, such as a municipality or First Nation, to set the speed limits for provincial roads in urban areas within its boundaries.

The Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion? *[Agreed]*

The motion is accordingly passed.

No further introduction of bills? Committee reports?

TABLING OF REPORTS

French spoken

Hon. Glen Simard (Minister responsible for Francophone Affairs): Honorable Président, je me lève pour présenter le rapport annuel à la communauté pour les services en français, les activités mises en œuvre par le gouvernement du Manitoba à l'appui des services en français.

Translation

I rise to table the annual report to the community on French-language services and the activities carried out by the government of Manitoba in support of French-language services.

English

Honourable Speaker, I rise today to table the 2023-24 Annual Report on French Language Services.

The Speaker: Members' statements?

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS**Municipal Government Awareness Week**

Hon. Glen Simard (Minister of Municipal and Northern Relations): Honourable Speaker, Monsieur le Président [*Mr. Speaker*], I rise before the House today to recognize November 23 to November 29, 2025, as municipal government awareness week.

Municipal government awareness week provides an important moment for Manitobans to recognize the work of municipal leaders and the impact their local government has on their daily lives.

Municipal governments play a foundational role in the well-being of our communities by delivering essential services such as waste collection, road maintenance and police and fire protection.

This year, we extend our deepest thanks to all the municipal leaders, staff and community volunteers who worked tirelessly on the front lines of this disaster. Your collective strength and service helped us get through this difficult time, and we are genuinely appreciative.

Over 100 municipal fire departments answered the call during the wildfire emergencies across the province, with crews from all regions of this province stepping up without hesitation.

Honourable Speaker, this is what one Manitoba is all about. Their dedication and courage did not go unnoticed.

French spoken

Les municipalités du Manitoba ont démontré leur leadership à notre gouvernement et à toute la population manitobaine à des moments où nous faisons face à de grands défis.

Translation

Manitoba's municipalities have proven their leadership to our government and to all Manitobans at a time of significant challenges.

English

Manitoba's municipalities have proven their leadership to our government and countless Manitobans as we face some of our most challenging moments.

Whether in times of emergency or in day-to-day governance, municipal leaders provide a steady guidance that keeps our communities moving forward.

Manitoba's municipalities are in a unique position: they're the first level of government services that are available to people and they're the economic drivers in some of our province's remote regions.

They foster meaningful dialogue, navigate change, make tough decisions and stay grounded in the needs of their residents.

I want to express my sincere appreciation and respect to municipal leaders for their unwavering commitment and steady leadership in serving Manitobans.

I also want to thank the Association of Manitoba Municipalities for their continued partnership and dedicated advocacy on behalf of all municipalities on important matters like: The City of Winnipeg Charter Amendment and Planning Amendment Act, bill 3; and the planning amendment act, bill 4.

The Association of Manitoba Municipalities' annual fall convention is taking place this year from November 25 to 27. It's an invaluable opportunity for mayors, councillors, reeves and administrators to share insights, build knowledge and strengthen their collective capacity to serve their residents better.

Our government strongly supports and encourages these efforts. We extend our best wishes to the Association of Manitoba Municipalities and all convention participants for a productive, forward-looking and successful gathering.

French spoken

J'aimerais aussi reconnaître le travail acharné et les efforts de mobilisation de l'Association des municipalités bilingues du Manitoba, qui représente la voix des municipalités bilingues au Manitoba depuis 30 ans.

L'AMBM a établi le modèle de maturité municipale qui permet aux municipalités de mesurer leur capacité à fournir des services bilingues selon les besoins.

L'AMBM a aussi assuré le financement pour améliorer l'offre des services en français et l'affichage bilingue dans les communautés. Il a plaidé pour les initiatives essentielles relativement au développement économique et le changement climatique. Ce travail appuie la vitalité et la croissance des municipalités francophones et bilingues à travers le Manitoba.

Translation

I would also like to acknowledge the hard work and advocacy efforts of the Association of Manitoba Bilingual Municipalities, which has been the voice of bilingual municipalities in Manitoba for 30 years.

The AMBM developed the municipal maturity model, which allows municipalities to measure their capacity to provide bilingual services as needed.

The AMBM has also secured funding to improve French-language services and bilingual signage in communities. It has advocated for essential initiatives related to economic development and climate change. This work supports the vitality and growth of francophone and bilingual municipalities across Manitoba.

English

We are all leading through incredible challenges, and we continue to face unprecedented times, and our province's municipalities do not have to chart this path alone.

We do this because we believe in this partnership, because we believe that municipalities are the masters of their destinies and that they should be free to plan for their future.

We remain dedicated to being a listening and collaborative government, serving as your serious partners in governance and in getting the job done.

We have accomplished so much together over the past two years, and I'm hopeful for the future and for what our two respective levels of government can achieve together.

By raising greater awareness and appreciation about the vital role of municipalities, we can encourage every Manitoban to celebrate their local governments and take an active role in strengthening our communities.

Let's take this opportunity to honour and celebrate the essential role of municipal governments continue to play in driving progress and improving the lives of Manitobans.

Thank you, merci, miigwech.

Mr. Trevor King (Lakeside): I am pleased to rise today to recognize municipal government awareness week, which began on November 23. This marks another year of celebrating the essential role that municipal governments play in the day-to-day lives of Manitobans, and the continued growth of this week speaks to the importance of the work happening in every community across our province.

Municipalities are the closest and most accessible level of government to the people. Their decisions affect every aspect of daily life, regardless of a person's ability, identity or background. From waste management and road maintenance to policing, fire protection, recreation services, land use planning and emergency response, municipalities deliver the core services that keep our communities safe, functional and thriving. These services form the foundation for economic, social and cultural growth in Manitoba.

But municipalities are more than service providers. They are full and essential partners in governance. Their insights and leadership help shape provincial policy, and their advocacy ensures local priorities remain front and centre.

I want to commend the Association of Manitoba Municipalities and the Association of Manitoba Bilingual Municipalities for their continued dedication to representing and supporting municipal leaders across Manitoba. Their work ensures that local voices are heard and that municipal concerns are brought forward with clarity, purpose and collaboration.

* (13:50)

With the AMM annual fall convention under way this week, municipal leaders from across the province are gathering in Winnipeg to share ideas, strengthen capacity and debate their resolutions. These discussions reflect the commitment municipal officials bring to improving their communities and building a stronger Manitoba.

Honourable Speaker, as someone who had the privilege of serving for 12 years in municipal government, first as a councillor and then as a reeve, and also as an Interlake director on the AMM board, I have seen first-hand the dedication of our municipal leaders, CAOs and their staff. Their work is challenging, often underappreciated and absolutely vital to the health and success of our province.

Municipal officials take on significant responsibility, often while juggling full-time jobs, family commitments, farms and community obligations. They face long evenings, tight budgets and difficult decisions

that rarely come with simple answers. And they do it not for praise or recognition, but because they care deeply about their neighbours and their communities. Nobody goes into municipal government for the money or the glory. It is a labour of love rooted in service, duty and the belief that strong local leadership builds a strong Manitoba.

Honourable Speaker, we must also acknowledge the growing climate of political intimidation that many municipal officials are facing. There is no place in Manitoba for threats, harassment or hostility toward those who step forward to serve. Elected officials are ordinary people; people you would meet at the grocery store or the curling rink. They deserve the same courtesy, respect and basic decency that we extend to every fellow Manitoban. We can disagree passionately on policy without dehumanizing the people who hold office.

This week reminds us not only of the essential services municipalities provide but also of the people who make those services possible.

Their sacrifice, their resilience and their commitment deserve our recognition and our gratitude.

I want to welcome some of the municipal officials that are in the gallery today, some of who I've have had the opportunity and honour to work with over the years.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Dasmesh School Winnipeg

MLA JD Devgan (McPhillips): Honourable Speaker, one of the highlights of representing McPhillips is getting to celebrate the incredible young people who shape our community's future. Today I rise to recognize the outstanding achievements of the student debaters in McPhillips.

Dasmesh School Winnipeg is Manitoba's first English Sikh school, and it has become a place where academic excellence is strengthened by cultural learning, community values and pride in identity.

A shining example of their excellence is their debate program for students in grades 6 to 9. This year has been an exceptional one for the program.

In May, three grade 8 students—Gurshaan Brar, Amitoj Sidhu and Sehjat Gosal—travelled to British Columbia to compete at the junior high speech nationals. One week later, Gurshaan and Amitoj also made a trip to Montreal to represent their school at the national debate championship.

More recently, from November 14 to 17, a grade 8 team made up of Sehaj Kaur Kooner and Ramneek Rai and the debate duo of Gurshaan Brar and Amitoj Sidhu travelled to Calgary for the national championship of British Parliamentary debate.

These achievements reflect the incredible talent of McPhillips youth. They show the hard work of students, the support of families and the dedication of educators and coaches.

Today, I ask all my colleagues to join me in celebrating these remarkable debaters and in recognizing Dasmesh School for nurturing leadership, confidence and academic excellence right here in McPhillips.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

Garth Mitchell

Mr. Greg Nesbitt (Riding Mountain): Honourable Speaker, today I rise to recognize and celebrate the remarkable career and community service of Garth Mitchell, who recently retired after an extraordinary 45 years of public service to the Municipality of Wallace-Woodworth and the Village of Elkhorn.

Garth began his career in 1980 at the age of just 19, serving as secretary-treasurer for the Village of Elkhorn. Over the decades that followed, he became a trusted and steady hand, guiding councils through amalgamation, major infrastructure projects and the ever-evolving challenges of municipal governance. As chief administrative officer, Garth's integrity, fairness and commitment to residents earned him the respect of countless councillors, colleagues and citizens.

Through thousands of meetings and service calls, Garth's focus never wavered from what mattered most: people. He has been praised for his ability to listen, to guide and to lead with quiet confidence. He never sought the limelight, but his advocacy and behind-the-scenes work helped many projects come to life in the municipality.

But Garth's legacy extends far beyond the council chambers. He has been a pillar of the Elkhorn community and is known across Manitoba for dedicating decades to coaching hockey teams, from minor levels through to Junior A and senior leagues. His passion for the sport has inspired hundreds of young athletes, teaching lessons in teamwork, discipline and community spirit.

In retirement, Garth looks forward to time with his wife Kim, their children and six grandchildren, no doubt continuing to cheer from the stands.

On behalf of this Legislature and the people of Manitoba, we extend our heartfelt thanks to Garth Mitchell for his lifetime of service, leadership and love for community.

Please rise and join with me in recognizing Garth and his wife Kim, who join us today in the gallery.

Thank you.

Black History Month's Celebration Committee

Hon. Jamie Moses (Minister of Business, Mining, Trade and Job Creation): Black History Manitoba plays a vital role in promoting, celebrating and sharing Black culture and heritage with all Manitobans. I'm honoured to rise to recognize and acknowledge the committee's tremendous contributions to our province.

For 45 years, the Black History Month celebration committee has led Manitoba in celebrating awareness of Black history, fostering appreciation for contributions of people of African ancestry and Black identity, and highlighting achievements in arts, education, government, sports, science and so much more.

This work is crucial. Understanding our history helps fuel our fight against breaking down systemic barriers and celebrating our achievement, builds resistance—resilience for the next generation to find their own Black excellence.

This February's theme for Black History Month is Rooted in Legacy. This is a deeply meaningful theme, as 2026 marks a historic milestone: 100 years since the first celebration of Black history was started by historian Carter G. Woodson.

Rooted in Legacy invites us to reflect on the significance and impact of Black history and Black life. It calls on us to honour the contributions and resilience and excellence of Black individuals, communities whose legacies continue to shape and enrich our society today.

From the cornerstone opening events like the Martin Luther King Jr. tribute, to the closing awards and banquet and everything else in between, like First Fridays at the museum, cooking and history 'lection,' including the Winnipeg Jets Black History Night. I encourage all Manitobans to participate in the many, many events that happen throughout January, February and maybe even a little into March.

Now, joining us in the gallery today are Manitoba's Black History Month celebration committee: Nadia Thompson, Pastor Calvert Layne, Berhane Andu, Dr. Lois Stewart-Archer, Dr. Brian Archer. I invite all

my colleagues to join me in welcoming here and recognizing them for their profound impact on Manitoba for their work.

Thank you so much.

Issues Affecting Manitobans with Disabilities

Ms. Jodie Byram (Agassiz): I rise today to speak on an issue that affects many vulnerable individuals who often go unnoticed in our communities, particularly those living with limited accessibility and resources.

* (14:00)

In a province celebrated for its rich cultures and its strong sense of community, the reality is that many Manitobans are struggling in silence. They are the parents who care for children with disabilities, persons who live with disabilities, all whom navigate their daily lives facing challenges and barriers that most of us cannot even begin to comprehend. Whether due to physical disabilities, mental health issues or socio-economic constraints, these individuals often encounter a system that overlooks their needs.

Imagine waking up each day knowing that basic tasks—getting to work, attending medical appointments or accessing essential services—are fraught with obstacles. For many, the lack of accessible transportation options, inadequate housing and the insufficient support for families, especially those with disabled children, all creates a cycle of disadvantage that is difficult to escape.

The disparity they experience is not just a statistic; it is a lived reality that affects their dignity, opportunities and overall quality of life.

It is evident that this NDP government missed a crucial opportunity to recognize and address these disparities in their recent Throne Speech. Rather than prioritizing accessibility, securing funding for support services and developing inclusive programs, especially for our children and youth, this government remained glaringly silent on the pressing issues affecting individuals with disabilities and their families.

These Manitobans are lacking the support and recognition that they so deserve, once again being overlooked. When will this government demonstrate respect for those vulnerable people?

Community Safety Night in The Maples

Hon. Mintu Sandhu (Minister of Public Service Delivery): This summer, I spent a lot of time out in the community in The Maples. I made it a priority to be out as much as possible, meeting people where they are.

Whether it was talking with the folks on their doorsteps, stopping in at local events or hearing concerns at the grocery store, every conversation helped me better understand the everyday experiences of the people I'm honoured to represent.

I had many meaningful conversations about health care, affordability, safety, immigration and education. People shared their hopes, their frustrations and their ideas. I want them to know that our government is listening.

Honourable Speaker, I also recently hosted a Community Safety Night at Amber Trails Community School. We had a great turnout of neighbours who came to share their experiences and learn practical ways to keep our families and streets safe. Members of the Winnipeg Police Community Relations team joined us and offered helpful advice on personal safety and crime prevention. They provided simple, useful tips that anyone can use to build their own safety plan.

I want to thank everyone who came out to the Community Safety Night and shared their thoughts. Your voices help me—guide the decisions we made—make, strengthening our connections with our community.

Together, we can make The Maples and all of Manitoba a safer place for everyone.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

ORAL QUESTIONS

Safe Consumption Site Location Neighbourhood Safety Concerns

Mr. Obby Khan (Leader of the Official Opposition): Honourable Speaker, I want to start by recognizing AMM members here in the gallery and thank them for the work they are doing in their municipalities.

While AMM members are working to strengthen municipalities, this Premier is working on destroying downtown Winnipeg by opening a drug consumption site.

We have seen record numbers of violent crimes, break-ins, fires, assaults, yet the Premier thinks it's a good idea to offer people a place to come and consume hard, illegal drugs and then go out in the public, courtesy of this NDP government.

This has been tried and tested—[interjection]

The Speaker: Order.

Mr. Khan: —and failed in other provinces. In a public report from Vancouver, it says, and I quote: The sale and use of illicit drugs is as common as break-ins, thefts, property damage and vandalism. End quote.

When will the Premier stop with forcing a safe consumption site or a drug consumption site downtown and listen to Manitobans?

Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier): Honourable Speaker, I hate drugs. Like so many families, the family that I'm a part of has seen terrible impacts.

And that's why we've been working so hard and that's why we're encouraged that, after a couple years in office, the Winnipeg Police Service's crime statistics numbers are going down. Still a lot more work to do, but the numbers are moving in the right direction; so are this year's numbers when it comes to overdoses.

On the other side of the House, it's a hard right turn. And I got to say, it's a hard turn to watch: division, fear mongering and an attitude that is completely unhinged from reality. But that's the PCs. That's what led them to the dustbins of history. We'll leave them there.

We're going to continue hiring police officers. We're going to continue bringing the hammer down on drug traffickers. And we're going to continue providing a path to recovery for those in our families and communities who need help.

The Speaker: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, on a supplementary question.

Community Consultation Period

Mr. Khan: While the Premier wants to attack common sense on this side of the House, he's also attacking over 200 Manitobans that came out to the Legislature yesterday and wanted answers.

They are asking for oversight, independent reviews and reporting, just like we are on this side of the House. We asked the NDP and this Premier for reasonable amendments that would show Manitobans transparency and accountability.

And what did the NDP and the Premier do? They voted no. That means every single NDP MLA, like the ones from Tuxedo, Lagimodière, Waverley, Radisson and McPhillips don't want you to have a say when this Premier and this NDP government open a drug consumption site in your neighbourhood.

Will the Premier commit today to a 90-day consultation period with community—[*interjection*]

The Speaker: Order.

Mr. Khan:—members, like federal regulation requires?

Mr. Kinew: I'll never talk down to you, the people of Manitoba, because how—I saw how smart you were in voting them out of office, in seeing through their traps.

They're trying to do it again, by the way. Sleight of hand there, where he's trying to confuse two separate issues. The amendments that he's talking about would have closed the drunk tank. Is that what you want in your community? When people are causing an issue in the street, they need to be taken off the street. It's that simple.

But if you want to talk about votes, I would say, Honourable Speaker, let's talk about the apology tour he went on last weekend, trying to make amends with the LGBT community. It begs a simple question about votes.

There are four members of his caucus who voted against human rights for the LGBT folks in our province. They are—and I'll table the documents that show this Goert [*phonetic*]-or rather, the member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen), the member for Borderland (Mr. Guenter), the member for La Vérendrye (Mr. Narth) and the member for Springfield-Ritchot (Mr. Schuler), who is now giving me the thumbs-up, indicating that he wants to double down on voting against the human rights of LGBT folks.

All I have to say for the member opposite—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, on a final supplementary question.

Mr. Khan: There you have it, Manitoba. I'm asking the Premier a question about drug consumption sites and safety—[*interjection*]

The Speaker: Order.

Mr. Khan:—in your neighbourhood, and he wants to attack on LGBTQ+ issues.

I'll ask the Premier: Why is he so afraid of consultation? The mayor of Winnipeg says consultation's important. We on this side of the House say consultation's important. And you, Manitobans, say consultation's important. And this Premier is blocking you from that.

His arrogance is so great, he thinks he has all the answers without listening to you.

So I'll ask the Premier again today: Will he simply commit to the 90 days of consultation as is required by federal regulation to let Manitobans have their say and tell this NDP government how terrible of an idea it is to open a drug consumption site in your neighbourhood?

Mr. Kinew: If you're watching this on the opposition's social media, you should go read his comments from committee where he apologized for using that language: drug consumption site. Now, he apologized then because, obviously, he couldn't have the courage of his convictions. Today, he wants to do a hard right turn and get some likes on social media.

But here's the thing: when we're talking about social media, we should look at new PC Party board member Patrick Allard, the presumptive St. Johns nominee.

Again, the member opposite made the rounds last Friday on an apology tour and trying to plead to everybody: I'm not anti-LGBT; I'm not anti-LGBT.

Well, I'll post this Facebook—or, I'll share this, rather, with the House by tabling the documents.

* (14:10)

It's very clear that this is not an isolated anti-LGBT sentiment; this appears to be the entire election strategy.

The Speaker: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, on a new question.

Greylisting of HSC and Thompson Hospitals Workplace Safety Concerns for Nurses

Mr. Obby Khan (Leader of the Official Opposition): Mr. Speaker, in Manitoba, I ask you: Where have I ever said one thing that's anti-LGBT or trans? I'll quote from the Premier here—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

The Speaker: Order.

Mr. Khan:—and I quote: It's only—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

The Speaker: Order. Order. Order.

NDP bench needs to come to order. We can't have hollering across the way.

Mr. Khan: I ask, when have I said that, and what do they want to do? Just want to yell.

But I'll quote from you—from this Premier. Quote: It's only gay if you make eye contact, end quote, in reference to wrestling.

And there's another one, Honourable Speaker. Quote: Do you like the 90s? is a gay pickup line. Who said that? This Premier. This Premier said that, and I'll table it for the House.

Maybe he could answer a question for once. This question is about why another hospital in Manitoba has been greylisted under this NDP government. Nurses—97 per cent of nurses at Thompson hospital say it's unsafe to work there.

So I'll ask the Premier a question; maybe he could finally answer it: Why is he forcing nurses to work in unsafe working conditions?

Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier): You know, everybody deserves to go to work safe, including LGBT folks, including LGBT folks who work in the health-care system today, Honourable Speaker. I'm happy to share that we posted the new job positions for the institutional safety officers.

The members on the other side, however, though, need to do some explaining when it comes to PC Party board member Patrick Allard's social media posts. Again, there is some very, very hateful language here. Just posted over the weekend, posted about the Opposition Leader's actions in not standing for the Transgender Day of Remembrance.

I'll table these documents for the House because this is not a fringe view in the PC Party. This is the person who is going to be charged with coming up with the strategy, the election ads, whatever communication they put out in the next election, and he is doing so at the behest of the Opposition Leader.

Asking on behalf of my LGBT colleagues both here and around the province: Why is—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, on a supplementary question.

Mr. Khan: Honourable Speaker, the Premier wants to talk about somebody who's not elected in here. Well, I'm going to talk about someone who is: the Premier. When it comes to hate speech, and I quote: Mommy sold their ass for some crack and booze, end quote. And I quote again: F-word, I see a slut and I just have to get at her. Another—end quote—quote: Pussy, booze and drugs; yes, these are my addictions. End quote.

Honourable Speaker, this is the type of language that comes out of the Premier. This is the type of hate speech that comes out of the Premier. I'm asking about safe working conditions in Thompson hospital; 97 per cent of nurses said it's unsafe to work there, and the Premier wants to slur hate speech.

So I'll ask him: When is the Premier going to get off his butt and do something to make the working conditions at Thompson hospital and HSC safe for nurses?

The Speaker: Order, please.

I would caution the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition about some of the language he just used in that question. It comes dangerously close to being unparliamentary, even if you're quoting things. So please be more careful in the future.

Mr. Kinew: He's not very good, is he? Like, I mean, there's kids in the gallery. Give your head a shake. I'd be like the member for Portage la Prairie (MLA Bereza) and not applaud him either.

Now, when it comes to the issue at hand, we posted the security positions today, so those jobs are going to be filled. But when we're talking about workplace safety, what about for our LGBT colleagues who are here right now? What about their safety in the workplace?

Why does he stand along with the member for Springfield-Ritchot (Mr. Schuler) and Steinbach and La Vérendrye and Borderland—[interjection]

The Speaker: Order.

Mr. Kinew: —who voted against recognizing the human rights of LGBT folks?

What about LGBT nurses? What about LGBT doctors? We are very lucky that a lot of LGBT health-care practitioners are coming here because of the craziness of the Trump regime. Will they turn around and leave the front lines if that person is the premier? It's a really, really messy thing.

But here's the thing: These aren't even his convictions. He's just doing a terrible job of trying to appeal to the right-wing rural base of the party and then try to maintain some—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, on a final supplementary question.

Mr. Khan: Honourable Speaker, I apologize for that language that was full of hate, but I was just quoting from the Premier himself.

Wait times in ERs, senior care, home care, surgery wait times are all worse than they were two years ago before this failing NDP government, Honourable Speaker.

Greylisting in this province has happened the last three times under this NDP government, Honourable Speaker. The nurses are only asking for limiting public access points, installing panic alarms, a mandatory emergency protocol and enhanced mental health supports.

None of these are unreasonable, Honourable Speaker. Or maybe the simple fact is that these are 100 per cent reasonable and the Premier simply has an incompetent, failing Health Minister.

So will the Premier fire his failing Health Minister today?

Mr. Kinew: No. We got the best minister in the country right here.

Honourable Speaker, 3,500 more health-care workers. New emergency rooms opened that they closed. I don't know, what do you think, folks across Manitoba: Is it better to have more people working in health care? Yes. Is it better to have more emergency rooms? Yes, it is.

And as for all those reasonable security measures, why didn't he do any of them when he was sitting around the Cabinet table with—*[interjection]*

The Speaker: Order.

Mr. Kinew: —Heather Stefanson? Worst premier ever in history, Heather Stefanson was.

But right now that he is the Leader of the Opposition, he just steps on rake upon rake upon rake. When he tries to pander to the hard right, he gets afraid of the urban progressives. When he shows his true urban progressive colours, he's terrified of the hard right. Which one is it? The reality is this: none of them. He stands for nothing. He will be nothing—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired. *[interjection]*

Order.

Greylisting of HSC and Thompson Hospitals Workplace Safety Concerns for Nurses

Mrs. Kathleen Cook (Roblin): The NDP are once again breaking records in Manitoba. Now, not only do we have the longest ER wait times; now, for the first time in history, under this NDP government, two Manitoba hospitals have been greylisted at the same time by the Manitoba Nurses Union.

HSC has been greylisted for three months, with no end in sight. And now nurses have voted by a landslide to greylist Thompson General Hospital as well. In response, the minister has basically shrugged their shoulders. But when they call the next election, you can bet the NDP will be calling up MNU members to demand their support.

Why does the NDP take the support of nurses for granted?

Hon. Uzoma Asagwara (Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care): Honourable Speaker, on this side of the House, we love nurses, we respect nurses. It's part of the reason why we've got two nurses in our caucus.

Actually, we take that very seriously. No thanks to the member opposite; she was busy advising Heather Stefanson to fire nurses. So the member for Tuxedo (MLA Compton) and I were lucky to still have our jobs under the previous government, right?

But on this side of the House, we're investing in more safety and security for nurses and all health-care workers. Institutional safety officer roles are posted for Thompson hospital—*[interjection]*

The Speaker: Order.

MLA Asagwara: —something that didn't happen for years under the previous PC government, despite there being legislation in place.

Maybe the member for Roblin can stand up and explain to nurses: Why was she advising Heather Stefanson to do the opposite of what she's advocating for today, and that's take any action whatsoever?

Mrs. Cook: The minister says they all love nurses. They sure have a funny way of showing it. The only time a hospital has been greylisted in Manitoba history has been under an NDP government. They don't make this decision lightly.

This decision comes following shots fired in the hospital chapel in December, a stabbing in the ER waiting room in September and ongoing unaddressed

and worsening safety conditions in Thompson. Manitoba nurses have put forward a very specific list of reasonable requests.

* (14:20)

When will the minister be taking action to implement these changes?

MLA Asagwara: Honourable Speaker, again, I think it's really important for Manitobans to understand that not only are we taking action by posting institutional safety officer jobs and hiring about 130 across the province, but the member for Roblin was advising Heather Stefanson—who was both the former premier and former minister of Health—to fire nurses from across this province and to not take action like hiring institutional safety officers or adding weapons detectors, which we've done, or increase safety and security measures across sites across the province.

The member for Roblin sits on the side of the House that made safety and security worse. We're fixing their mess, fixing their damage and we're going to keep doing this work until all health-care workers feel the benefits of it—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

The honourable member for Roblin, on a final supplementary question.

Mrs. Cook: It's been three months since HSC was greylisted, and clearly the minister has not addressed nurses' concerns, because if they had, the greylisting would have been lifted by now. Instead, this minister deflects and discredits any criticism of their record, even when it comes from front-line nurses.

I'll table a quote from a nurse in Thompson that MNU posted last week. It says, quote: The Minister of Health stood in our facility to say that the northern regional health authority has received the funding. That's a total inaccuracy. We are suffering here; we are not safe. What a waste of a stop on the infamous bullshift tour. Unquote.

Manitobans want to know who's telling the truth: front-line nurses or the NDP?

MLA Asagwara: Honourable Speaker, I don't have to do anything to discredit the member for Roblin. She has zero credibility on health care whatsoever. The previous PC government spent seven and a half years cutting health care, firing nurses and taking less than zero action to improve safety and security.

Our government is going to continue to do the work to improve safety and security across health care

in this province, no matter where folks work. But I also want to be very clear: all health-care workers of all identities deserve to be safe in the workplace. I'm proud to have met with 2SLGBTQ+ doctors and nurses who have come to Manitoba from the States because they know that we're going to treat them with respect here.

Now, that would not look the same under the member for Roblin, who continues to stand up and either vote against or not even acknowledge 2SLGBTQ+ communities. We stand for all Manitobans and all Manitoba health-care workers.

Investments in Manitoba's Economy Concern for Missed Opportunities

Mr. Konrad Narth (La Vérendrye): In advance of last week's Throne Speech, this Premier (Mr. Kinew) was seen with the Prime Minister, Christmas shopping for commitment that he could include in his Throne Speech. But despite all the photo ops and political theatre, nothing substantial was delivered for Manitoba: no new investment, no support for our shrinking private sector, no plan to bring back industry jobs.

While other premiers are securing major commitments, this Premier walked away empty handed.

Will the Premier explain why he can't deliver a single win for Manitobans, even with the Prime Minister standing right beside him?

Hon. Jamie Moses (Minister of Business, Mining, Trade and Job Creation): Well, one of the biggest wins for Manitoba's economy was getting rid of the former failed PC government a couple of years ago [*inaudible*].

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Moses: The reality is, Honourable Speaker, that we created 25,000 new jobs here in Manitoba over the last two years. That's real action to get our economy moving forward. And on top of that, yes, we're working on major projects. We're working to grow our economy in real and significant and meaningful ways. We'll continue to do that because it means more prosperity for Manitobans.

It also means more opportunities for us to seek ways to build a national economy, working with partners at the federal level, municipal and local levels to build an economy that works here in Manitoba for Manitobans.

The Speaker: The time has expired.

The honourable member for La Vérendrye, on a supplementary question.

Mr. Narth: Honourable Speaker, we saw a lot of fluff there, but I'll tell you the facts. Across Manitoba, businesses are sounding the alarm, investment is leaving, projects are relocating to other provinces and approvals are slower today than they were two years ago.

But in last week's Throne Speech—[interjection]

The Speaker: Order.

Mr. Narth: —the government refused to acknowledge these problems. No competitiveness agenda, no red tape reduction, no strategy to restore confidence in Manitoba's economy.

Why is this NDP government ignoring the reality that Manitoba is being passed over for major projects while they pat themselves on the back for recycled announcements?

Mr. Moses: We are doing so much to grow our economy right here in Manitoba. On top of that, in 25 and—thousand new jobs here the last two years, we opened a brand new gold mine, a billion-dollar investment to grow our critical mineral sector right here in Manitoba. That's something members opposite could never say. They never had that level of investment in our critical mineral space. But we accomplished that by working together.

On top of that, our new economic development strategy says we're launching a new \$50-million loan program to make sure that businesses have the capital to invest right here at home. On top of that, we're doubling our export support program so more businesses opportunities to get their goods that are made right here in Manitoba over across the globe and make sure that we do that in a way that grows our economy, adding more jobs—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

The honourable member for La Vérendrye, on a final supplementary question.

Mr. Narth: I appreciate that he mentioned the gold mine that our government put into place. I'm surprised he missed out Churchill, though, because that's what the Premier's (Mr. Kinew) been going on. Yet, after two years, he has not secured a single customer, a single shipper or a single trade deal to move product through that port.

Last week's Throne Speech doubled down on spending millions of taxpayer dollars on yet another study, but still no contracts, no commodities, no suppliers and no confirmed buyers.

Will the minister responsible for economic development explain why this government is pouring money into a port with no products to ship and no customers lined up?

Mr. Moses: It seems very clear that member opposite is against expanding our economy by investing in Port of Churchill. That's a shame. But it matches up with their approach because, under their record, we had tens of thousands of Manitobans fleeing the province. That was their record on their out-migration trend. Under their record we had skyrocketing inflation.

Now, Manitobans don't want to go back down that path, that failed path by the former failed PC government. Instead, they want a government that listens, that works together with businesses, together with workers to grow an economy, and that's exactly what we're doing by ensuring our economic development strategy brings together Manitobans of all walks of life, from all regions, to build an economy that works for everyone.

Infrastructure Projects—Manitoba Jobs Agreement Concern for Non-Unionized Workforce

Mr. Josh Guenter (Borderland): The NDP government used their Throne Speech last week to take a victory lap on the so-called Manitoba jobs agreement. They are celebrating and patting themselves on the back for cutting 80 per cent of Manitoba's construction workers out of being able to build our schools, hospitals and highways simply because these workers, these Manitobans, chose not to be unionized.

Why is this NDP Labour minister taking a victory lap on a deal that puts Manitobans out of work?

Hon. Mintu Sandhu (Minister of Public Service Delivery): I want to thank the member for the—that question. Honourable Speaker, we are a listening government. We are listening to Manitoba workers. We want to protect Manitoba jobs. We want to see Friendly Manitoba licence plates on the work site. We want to do everything we can to protect jobs for Manitobans.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

Mr. Guenter: It was a question for the NDP Labour Minister. I think affected stakeholders want to hear from this NDP—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

The Speaker: Order.

Mr. Guenter:—Labour Minister who put forward this disastrous deal. This NDP government is not listening. They brought this deal in, this tone-deaf, ham-fisted deal in their take-it-or-leave-it approach without any consultation with any of the affected stakeholders.

* (14:30)

No wonder—it's no wonder, Honourable Speaker—that under the NDP, unemployment is up, our economy is dead last now in the entire country and businesses are leaving.

Why is this NDP Labour Minister working so hard to prevent non-unionized Manitobans from working?

MLA Sandhu: I don't know why the member from Borderland who hates Manitoba workers, be it unionized or un-unionized, Honourable Speaker.

We will continue to stand with Manitoba workers—they are unionized or un-unionized. We will protect Manitoba jobs for Manitobans, Honourable Speaker.

And also, I don't know why the member doesn't want to protect wages, benefits and working conditions. Why doesn't he want to have those safety nets for the workers here in Manitoba, Honourable Speaker?

When it comes to the workers who—protecting Manitoba workers, we will stand always with them.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

The Speaker: The honourable member for Borderland, on a final supplementary question.

Mr. Guenter: That's exactly my point. This NDP government is not—is not—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

The Speaker: Order, please.

The government bench needs to come to order.

Mr. Guenter: This NDP government is not standing up for Manitoba workers.

All that the construction industry is asking for is for this NDP government to get off their backs, get out of the way and let them build.

Will this NDP Labour Minister reverse these disastrous decisions today, yes or no?

MLA Sandhu: We know that the PCs don't care about Manitoba workers. They spent seven and a half years attacking workers and forcing them to leave the province.

They made life more expensive for regular people, Honourable Speaker. They gave out contracts to their friends and PC campaign directors.

Their side chooses division; our side brings people together for one Manitoba, Honourable Speaker. When it comes to protecting Manitoba jobs for Manitobans, they have no leg to stand on.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

Tariffs on Softwood Lumber Impact on Manufacturers

Mrs. Carrie Hiebert (Morden-Winkler): Honourable Speaker, businesses in my constituency are being hit hard by soft lumber tariffs, putting hundreds of jobs and families at risk. In Morden-Winkler alone, manufacturers employing up to 600 people are struggling, yet this NDP government has nothing and has offered no solutions.

Why is this minister not taking desperately needed steps to protect Manitoba manufacturers from layoffs and closures?

Hon. Jamie Moses (Minister of Business, Mining, Trade and Job Creation): I thank the member opposite for that question.

We know that the impact of tariffs are real for manufacturers, for businesses that are exporting across the globe and particularly to the United States. Seventy-two per cent of exports that come out of Manitoba go to United States of America. So we are available here as a province of Manitoba to support those manufacturers.

One of the key initiatives we're rolling out is to take the PST off of manufacturing equipment and goods. This is a fantastic initiative that allows these manufacturers to have more capital on hand, to support our growing labour force in the manufacturing sector and make sure that they have the resources they need to continue exporting their amazing products right across the globe.

The Speaker: The honourable member for Morden-Winkler, on a supplementary question.

Mrs. Hiebert: Honourable Speaker, they can't invest in new equipment; they're hardly keeping their doors open. I have met with woodworker manufacturers in my constituency and they are deeply anxious; many not sleeping at night.

Tariffs are hitting our province hard, yet the Throne Speech offered no plan. Yet the Throne Speech needs to do more for our province.

Why has this government not—failed to recognize the seriousness of this crisis and act to protect now our manufacturers and families who depend on them?

Mr. Moses: Honourable Speaker, we continue to work with manufacturers and exporters right across our province. And some of that work includes working alongside CME, the Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters, and making sure we provide them with some resources to work with manufacturers and help them navigate the difficult time that is the tariff situation. We also work with the federal government to make sure that we support workers who are impacted by tariffs.

This is the real support that we can do to make sure workers can be supported through this challenging time. On top of the support that we're providing as a provincial government to take the PST off of manufacturing equipment, our government is here to support manufacturers, support businesses and support exporters during this challenging time of US tariffs.

The Speaker: The honourable member for Morden-Winkler, on a final supplementary question.

Mrs. Hiebert: Honourable Speaker, manufacturers are having trouble sleeping at night, yet the Premier (Mr. Kinew) shares reels of himself playing—partying with the Prime Minister at the Grey Cup. I want to know why he was not advocating for our Manitoba manufacturers who are struggling to keep doors open and employees in their jobs.

I will ask again: why is the government not taking these tariffs 'serioufay'—seriously and doing something now to protect manufacturers and their families right now?

Mr. Moses: Well, Honourable Speaker, while we continue to advocate for manufacturers and for exporters to make sure we grow our Manitoba economy, what do we see from the PC Party? We see them thanking Donald Trump for his tariffs.

What kind of approach would that be from an opposition to thank Donald Trump for his tariffs? Where is the support from them to the manufacturers? Zero, none, no support, no help from the PCs for manufacturers.

From our side of the House, our government takes this issue seriously, where we work with manufacturers, listen to them, provide them support, work with federal government to make sure that we have the tools and resources to fight against Donald Trump's tariffs and grow our economy right here in Manitoba.

Greylisting of HSC and Thompson Hospitals Workplace Safety Concerns for Nurses

MLA Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park): Honourable Speaker, on Friday, 97 per cent of Thompson hospital nurses voted to greylist the hospital. Being greylisted serves as a warning to patients and future staff of the on-site conditions being experienced.

This past summer, the Health Sciences Centre in Winnipeg was forced to do the same because of the long ongoing conditions. I've heard directly from those working in our health-care field over the last couple of days that they're not only overworked, but they're nervous for what is to come.

What is the government doing to support patients and those working in health care as hospitals are being greylisted?

Hon. Uzoma Asagwara (Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care): I thank the member for that question. Our government is going to continue to hire net-new health-care workers to the front lines of our health-care system. We've hired over 3,500 net-new health-care workers to the front lines.

We're going to continue to listen to those experts and partners across governments, Winnipeg police, regional health authorities, to take steps to ensure that all sites are more safe and more secure. And we're going to continue to do the work that wasn't done for seven and a half years.

We know that health-care workers deserve to know they can go to work and be safe, and go home to their families. So we're going to continue to work as a government to make sure we improve the workplace conditions and make sure they've got more folks working shoulder to shoulder with them on the front lines.

The Speaker: The honourable member for Tyndall Park, on a supplementary question.

Seven Oaks Hospital Water Main Break Operational Issues in Other Facilities

MLA Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park): Honourable Speaker, Thompson and HSC are not the only hospitals experiencing barriers to proper patient care. On November 19, the Seven Oaks hospital experienced a water main break. This impacted everything but urgent care, and even forced dialysis patients to be moved to other health-care facilities.

Thankfully, the dedicated health-care workers made sure patients received the best care possible under these difficult conditions. However, people are rightfully

nervous that the issues may be deeper than is—what is being disclosed.

Will the minister responsible share with the House if there are any other hospitals in Manitoba that are facing similar operational issues right now?

Hon. Uzoma Asagwara (Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care): Thank the member for the question. There was a water main break at Seven Oaks hospital. I was actually on site myself yesterday with the Deputy Minister of Health, taking a look at how it was being remedied.

Folks worked around the clock, quite literally 24-7, to fix that main break. And I want to thank all the nurses and health-care workers who stepped up late last night and throughout the night to provide dialysis care to dozens and dozens of Manitobans who needed it at sites outside of Seven Oaks, including our very own MLA for Tuxedo, who is a nurse herself, who specializes in dialysis care, who stepped up and was on site at HSC yesterday providing care to Manitobans.

That is the one Manitoba, all hands on deck approach. When there's a problem, the way we fix it is by working together.

* (14:40)

The Speaker: The honourable member for Tyndall Park, on a final supplementary question.

Diagnostic Testing and Surgical Procedures Call for Wait Time Reduction

MLA Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park): In addition to broken pipes and hospitals being greylisted, there are institutional issues currently in every hospital here in Manitoba.

It has been reported all over the news that wait times for emergency departments, surgical procedures and diagnostic testing have all increased over the past two years under the NDP government. Manitoba has the second highest percentage in Canada: 13 per cent of people are leaving emergency and urgent-care facilities without being seen.

When this government was in opposition, for seven years they said they had a plan for health care.

Can the government share when we can expect to see wait times begin to go down?

Hon. Uzoma Asagwara (Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care): I welcome that question from the member opposite.

We understand as a government that health care is Manitoba's No. 1 priority. It's our top priority as well, which is why we're going to continue to invest in strengthening it, not just hiring thousands of net-new health-care workers, but right now in Manitoba, we're training more health-care workers than we ever have in the history of this province. And we're going to continue to take that approach.

We also know that our government, in two years, has moved primary care in the right direction, and that is key to addressing some of those wait times challenges. Right now, Manitoba leads the country in being able to access primary care. You can get a doctor or nurse practitioner, primary-care provider, faster than anywhere else in the country here in Manitoba. We turned that around from being dead last—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

Trans-Canada Highway and PTH 5 Intersection Overpass Announcement

MLA David Pankratz (Waverley): Honourable Speaker, last week, our Premier and the Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation met with residents in Carberry to announce a historic investment to build an overpass at the intersection of Highways 1 and 5.

Residents are over the moon about this investment.

Can the Premier please share a little bit more about this historic investment and what it will mean for families and communities who rely on this critical route every single day?

Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier): Our government has announced that we are going to build an overpass at the intersection of the Trans-Canada and Highway 5, which was the site of that terrible, terrible tragedy.

Now, what does it mean for the people living in the area, as well as all of the other users of both of these highways? Well, it means more safety. It means that there is a government that listens to you. We really, really appreciate people participating in the consultation because it was a meaningful one. We were willing to change direction based on what we heard from you.

But more than anything, I would want the House to know this: After sharing the news and having many meaningful conversations on that day, I had one woman who lives just north of town, lost a friend from Dauphin on that terrible day, who came up and approached us and said simply, well, at least my friend didn't die in vain.

It is in her honour and the memory of all those souls that we lost, and in the spirit of protecting future lives, that we're very committed to deliver this important piece of infrastructure for you, the people of Manitoba.

Temporary Detention of Intoxicated Individuals Health-Care Staffing at Protective-Care Centres

MLA Jeff Bereza (Portage la Prairie): Honourable Speaker, yesterday afternoon at the Manitoba Legislative grounds, there was a huge rally against this government's rushed legislation—legislation, I must say, that went without our common sense PC amendments. This legislation is to place people in solitary confinement who are dealing with drug addiction.

On Monday, health officials said the detention facility will have an on-site paramedics and more health supervision, and I will table that article.

Honourable Speaker, can the minister tell us where and when this staff will come from when every corner of this province is short on paramedics and health-care people?

Hon. Bernadette Smith (Minister of Housing, Addictions and Homelessness): What I can tell that member is, we are taking a compassionate approach to supporting and helping and meeting people where they're at.

For far too long, our streets have been unsafe. Manitobans have told us that they want their streets back. We are working with police. We are working with experts in the medical field to make sure people get the supports they need, unlike members opposite who left our streets unsafe by firing police officers. They didn't take an approach that led people to harm reduction and ultimately to recovery.

And that's what this model is going to do. They're going to support—lead people to recovery and keep our streets safer, unlike members opposite.

The Speaker: The time for oral questions has expired.

Introduction of Guests

The Speaker: And I have some guests in the gallery I'd like to introduce.

We have seated in the public gallery from Abide Homeschool Group, 14 grade 9 students under the direction of Lynn Kleinssarrer [*phonetic*] and Linda Gross. And this group is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Dawson Trail (MLA Lagassé).

We welcome you here today.

And further guests in the public gallery: we have Garth and Kim Mitchell; Derek and Alyssa Labossiere and baby Liam; Iris Veracairgne [*phonetic*]; and Clayton Carnot [*phonetic*—and excuse my pronunciation; some people's writing is hard to read—that are guests of the honourable member for Riding Mountain (Mr. Nesbitt).

We welcome you here today.

PETITIONS

Programs for Adolescents with Disabilities

Ms. Jodie Byram (Agassiz): I wish to present the following petition.

To the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, the background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Children with disabilities often require child care beyond the age of 12. Children with disabilities aged 12 to 17 face a gap in publicly available care programs.

(2) The current adolescent-care service model creates undue hardship on caregivers.

(3) While developing children may be entering into extracurricular activities, school clubs or spending time with friends independently, children with disabilities have reduced opportunities for such social and recreational opportunities due to the lack of spaces.

(4) The current self-managed adolescent-care models place additional workloads onto already stressed families, requiring parents to seek all alternative options and prove their need for care.

(5) The current adolescent-care system, as part of overall respite and support available to families, is failing families of children with disabilities, as identified in the Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth's Bridging the Gaps report.

(6) To date, none of the nine recommendations it contains have been implemented beyond 50 per cent.

(7) The recommendations in this report touch on many of the issues facing families, with adolescent care being but a small component of their overall needs.

We petition the legislative of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to fully implement recommendations in the Bridging the Gaps report.

(2) To urge the provincial government to immediately implement official policies and procedures that are more respectful and collaborative, which also

minimize harm faced by families seeking help from Children's disABILITY Services.

(3) To urge the provincial—or to urge the Minister of Families to arrange for a full review of employment supports provided by Children's disABILITY Services for children with disabilities aged 12 to 17, including direct consultation with impacted families and to explore a full spectrum of options to support families, empowering them to choose solutions that best fit their needs.

This petition is signed by Laura Powell, Alexis Recksiedler and Christian Ignacio and many, many more Manitobans.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

Mr. Rick Wowchuk (Swan River): I wish to present the following petition.

To the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, the background to this petition is as follows:

* (14:50)

(1) Children with disabilities often require child care beyond the age of 12. Children with disabilities aged 12 to 17 face a gap in publicly available care programs.

(2) The current adolescent-care service model creates undue hardship on caregivers.

(3) While developing children may be entering into extracurricular activities, school clubs or spending time with friends independently, children with disabilities have reduced opportunities for such social and recreational opportunities due to the lack of spaces.

(4) The current self-managed adolescent-care models place additional workloads onto already stressed families, requiring parents to seek all alternative options and prove their need for care.

(5) The current adolescent-care system, as part of overall respite and support available to families, is failing families of children with disabilities, as identified in the Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth's Bridging the Gaps report.

(6) To date, none of the nine recommendations it contains have been completed beyond 50 per cent.

(7) The recommendations in this report touch on many of the issues facing families, with adolescent care being but a small component of their overall needs.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to fully implement recommendations in the Bridging the Gaps report.

(2) To urge the provincial government to immediately implement official policies and procedures that are more respectful and collaborative, which also minimize harm faced by families seeking help from the Children's disABILITY Services.

(3) To urge the Minister of Families to arrange for a full review of employment supports provided by Children's disABILITY Services for children with disabilities aged 12 to 17, including direct consultation with impacted families and to explore a full spectrum of options to support families, empowering them to choose solutions that best fit their needs.

This petition has been signed by many, many Manitobans.

Thank you.

Mrs. Kathleen Cook (Roblin): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Children with disabilities often require child care beyond the age of 12. Children with disabilities aged 12 to 17 face a gap in publicly available care programs.

(2) The current adolescent-care service model creates undue hardship on caregivers.

(3) While developing children may be entering into extracurricular activities, school clubs or spending time with friends independently, children with disabilities have reduced opportunities for such social and recreational opportunities due to the lack of spaces.

(4) The current self-managed adolescent-care models place additional workloads onto already stressed families, requiring parents to seek all alternative options and prove their need for care.

(5) The current adolescent-care system, as part of overall respite and support available to families, is failing families of children with disabilities, as identified in the Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth's Bridging the Gaps report.

(6) To date, none of the nine recommendations it contains have been completed beyond 50 per cent.

(7) The recommendations in this report touch on many of the issues facing families, with adolescent care being but a small component of their overall needs.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to fully implement recommendations in the Bridging the Gaps report.

(2) To urge the provincial government to immediately implement official policies and procedures that are more respectful and collaborative, which also minimize harm faced by families seeking help from Children's disABILITY Services; and

(3) To urge the Minister of Families to arrange for a full review of employment supports provided by Children's disABILITY Services for children with disabilities aged 12 to 17, including direct consultation with impacted families and to explore a full spectrum of options to support families, empowering them to choose solutions that best fit their needs.

And this petition is signed by Margaret Epp, Larry Fernandez, Paulo Ramos and many, many other Manitobans.

Mr. Wayne Balcaen (Brandon West): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Children with disabilities often require child care beyond the age of 12. Children with disabilities aged 12 to 17 face a gap in publicly available care programs.

(2) The current adolescent-care service model creates undue hardship on caregivers.

(3) While developing children may be entering into extracurricular activities, school clubs or spending time with friends independently, children with disabilities have reduced opportunities for such social and recreational opportunities due to the lack of spaces.

(4) The current self-managed adolescent-care models place additional workloads onto already stressed families, requiring parents to seek all alternative options and prove their need for care.

(5) The current adolescent-care system, as part of overall respite and support available to families, is failing families of children with disabilities, as

identified in the Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth's Bridging the Gaps report.

(6) To date, none of the nine recommendations it contains have been completed beyond 50 per cent.

(7) The recommendations in this report touch on many of the issues facing families, with adolescent care being but a small component of their overall needs.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to fully implement recommendations in the Bridging the Gaps report.

(2) To urge the provincial government to immediately implement official policies and procedures that are more respectful and collaborative, which also minimize harm faced by families seeking help from Children's disABILITY Services.

(3) To urge the Minister of Families to arrange for a full review of employment supports provided by Children's disABILITY Services for children with disabilities aged 12 to 17, including direct consultation with impacted families and to explore a full spectrum of options to support families, empowering them to choose solutions that best fit their needs.

* (15:00)

Honourable Speaker, this petition was signed by Nicola Sutherland, Nicole Hildebrand [*phonetic*] and many, many other fine Manitobans.

Mr. Josh Guenter (Borderland): Honourable Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Children with disabilities often require child care beyond the age of 12. Children with disabilities aged 12 to 17 face a gap in publicly available care programs.

(2) The current adolescent-care service model creates undue hardship on caregivers.

(3) While developing children may be entering into extracurricular activities, school clubs or spending time with friends independently, children with disabilities have reduced opportunities for such social and recreational opportunities due to the lack of spaces.

(4) The current self-managed adolescent-care models place additional workloads onto already stressed

families, requiring parents to seek all alternative options and prove their need for care.

(5) The current adolescent-care system, as part of overall respite and support available to families, is failing families of children with disabilities, as identified in the Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth's Bridging the Gaps report.

(6) To date, none of the nine recommendations it contains have been completed beyond 50 per cent.

(7) The recommendations in this report touch on many of the issues facing families, with adolescent care being but a small component of their overall needs.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to fully implement recommendations in the Bridging the Gaps report; and

(2) To urge the provincial government to immediately implement official policies and procedures that are more respectful and collaborative, which also minimize harm faced by families seeking help from Children's disABILITY Services; and

(3) To urge the Minister of Families to arrange for a full review of employment supports provided by Children's disABILITY Services for children with disabilities aged 12 to 17, including direct consultation with impacted families and to explore a full spectrum of options to support families, empowering them to choose solutions that best fit their needs.

This petition has been signed by Cathy Proctor, Russ Proctor, Serena Stearns and many, many Manitobans.

Mrs. Colleen Robbins (Spruce Woods): Honourable Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Children with disabilities often require child care beyond the age of 12. Children with disabilities aged 12 to 17 face a gap in publicly available care programs.

(2) The current adolescent-care service model creates undue hardship on caregivers.

(3) While developing children may be entering into 'extracurriculum' activities, school clubs or spending time with friends independently, children with disabilities have reduced opportunities for such social and recreational opportunities due to the lack of spaces.

(4) The current self-managed adolescent-care models place additional workloads onto already stressed families, requiring parents to seek alternate options—all alternate options and prove their need for care.

(5) The current adolescent-care system, as part of an overall respite and support available to families, is failing families of children with disabilities, as identified in the Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth's Bridging the Gaps report.

(6) To date, none of the nine recommendations it contains have been completed beyond 50 per cent.

(7) The recommendations in this report touch on many of the issues facing families, with adolescent care being but a small component of overall needs.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to fully implement recommendations in Bridging the Gaps report.

(2) To urge the provincial government to immediately implement official policies and procedures that are more respectful and collaborative, which also minimize harm faced by families seeking help from Children's disABILITY Services.

(3) To urge the Minister of Families to arrange for a full review of employment supports provided by Children's disABILITY Services for children with disabilities aged 12 to 17, including direct consultation with impacted families and to explore a full spectrum of options to support families, empowering them to choose solutions that best fit their needs.

This has been signed by Leah Andres, Michael Natividad, Joyce Onwire [*phonetic*] and many, many more Manitobans.

The Speaker: No further petitions?

Mr. Greg Nesbitt (Riding Mountain): Honourable Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Children with disabilities often require child care beyond the age of 12. Children with disabilities aged 12 to 17 face a gap in publicly available care programs.

(2) The current adolescent-care service model creates undue hardship on caregivers.

(3) While developing children may be entering into extracurricular activities, school clubs or spending time with friends independently, children with disabilities have reduced opportunities for such social and recreational opportunities due to the lack of spaces.

(4) The current self-managed adolescent-care models place additional workloads onto already stressed families, requiring parents to seek all alternative options and prove their need for care.

(5) The current adolescent-care system, as part of the overall respite and support available to families, is failing families of children with disabilities, as identified in the Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth's Bridging the Gaps report.

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(7) The recommendations in this report touch on many of the issues facing families, with adolescent care being but a small component of their overall needs.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to fully implement recommendations in the Bridging the Gaps report.

(2) To urge the provincial government to immediately implement official policies and procedures that are more respectful and collaborative, which also minimize—minimize harm faced by families seeking help from Children's disABILITY Services.

(3) To urge the Minister of Families to arrange for a full review of employment supports provided by Children's disABILITY Services for children with disabilities aged 12 to 17, including direct consultation with impacted families and to explore a full spectrum of options to support families, empowering them to choose solutions that best fit their needs.

Honourable Speaker, this petition has been signed by Sarah Ortega, Megan Holder, Diana [phonetic] Williams and many, many more fine Manitobans.

Thank you.

The Speaker: No further petitions?

ORDERS OF THE DAY GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

THRONE SPEECH (Fourth Day of Debate)

The Speaker: We will now resume debate on the address in reply to the Speech from the Throne and the amendment thereto.

The floor is open.

* (15:10)

Mrs. Rachelle Schott (Kildonan-River East): It's always a privilege to rise on behalf of the Kildonan-River East constituents. I rise today in response to our government's Speech from the Throne.

At the beginning, I'd just like to take a moment to acknowledge our amazing local staff team in Kildonan-River East. This past weekend, we had our third annual office house Christmas party—open house, rather, and this wouldn't have—not have been possible without our staff team and the local small businesses such as Oma's Bakeshop and Jeffrey's, both on Henderson Highway, right in Kildonan-River East. Their patience and flexibility with our orders changing, so many smiles—that brought so many smiles to so many neighbours this past week. And we were standing-room only at various points throughout the open house Christmas party, so thank you so much to everyone involved.

Every time I stand in this Chamber, I think about the trust that my neighbours put in me to bring their stories, their struggles and their hopes into this room. Many people in my constituency of Kildonan-River East waited a long time to feel that connection to their MLA again, and I do not take that responsibility lightly.

This Speech from the Throne sets out a vision for our province that chooses care over cuts and community over division. When I listen to it through the ears of my Kildonan-River East constituents, I hear real opportunities to make life better in very concrete ways, especially for families, seniors and renters who have been carrying more than their share of the burden for far too long.

I want to start with the kids and the people who care for them. In Kildonan-River East, we are very proud of our local school divisions, both River East Transcona on the east side of the river and Seven Oaks on the west side of the river. Families in my community noticed and appreciated that both of these school

divisions were named in the Throne Speech for new child-care spaces. That may just sound like a line in a speech, but for the parents who have sat on wait-lists for months or even years, or who drive across the city every morning to drop off their children, it is life-changing.

Since before I was elected—and certainly since—I have heard the same thing over and over again at the doorstep and at coffee in conversations: families want to work, they want their kids in high-quality early learning, and they cannot always find a space, or if they can, they simply can't afford it.

Whether—when I hear that the Throne Speech is committing to more spaces in River East Transcona and Seven Oaks School Division and to building out the promise of true \$10-a-day child care, including on non-school days, I hear progress on something people have begged governments to fix for years. They begged the former failed PC government, and there was no action.

But as a mom with two kids in the Manitoba school system, I listen closely to what our government plans to do in our classrooms. I see what teachers and educational assistants are juggling. So when the Throne Speech talks about the continued investments in schools, smaller class sizes for our youngest learners and a universal school nutrition program, that matters at a kitchen table level. No child should be trying to focus on reading or math while their stomach is empty. A meal at school can be the difference between a good day and a really, really hard one. I hear from educators in Kildonan-River East who tell me that when children are fed and supported, behaviour improves, learning improves and the whole classroom benefits.

These are the kinds of choices that show what our priorities are as a province. We are saying that every child deserves a fair start, not just the ones for families who can afford it.

Mr. Tyler Blashko, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

Honourable Speaker, I also want to talk about housing and renters because that is one of the biggest concerns in my community of Kildonan-River East. We have seniors in long-time apartments who are terrified of losing their homes after big rent increases in the past. We have young families spending more than half of their income on rent. We have newcomers who are grateful to be here, but are shocked at how hard it is to find a safe and affordable place to live.

For the past two years, I've been advocating for stronger protections for renters and more tools for tenants who feel powerless when they get a notice in the mail. I have brought these stories to our Premier (Mr. Kinew), to ministers, to committee and to this House, so when I hear in the Throne Speech that our NDP government will move forward with real measures to protect renters and bring more fairness to the rental system, I thought of the people who have phoned our office in tears wondering where they will go next.

We know housing is complex. We need more supply. We need repairs. We need supportive housing. And we need real teeth in protections for tenants. This Throne Speech does not pretend that we can solve everything overnight, but it does signal that renters are no longer an afterthought.

In Kildonan-River East, where many people live on fixed incomes or in modest rental housing, that shift is important. Much accomplished, more to do.

Health care and seniors care are also at the front of mind for my constituents. I do not think about a week—I do not think that even a week goes by without someone reaching out about a loved one waiting for a family doctor, a senior trying to access home care or a concern about long-term care. I am proud that the Premier has publicly said that the member for Kildonan-River East is always banging the table for supports for seniors. I take this as a compliment and a badge of honour, because our elders built this province and they deserve to age with dignity and not with anxiety about whether help will come.

This Throne Speech speaks to rebuilding health care by investing in the front lines, training more workers here in Manitoba and creating more neighbourhood-based care. That is exactly what people tell me they want. They want to see a nurse, a doctor or a practitioner in their own community without waiting in an emergency room for hours on end.

They want their parents and grandparents to have access to timely care, not to be shuffled between facilities because there are no bare-beds, which occurred for years under the previous failed Stefanson government.

For seniors in apartments along Henderson or Main Street, in our many condos and apartments, transportation is also a health-care issue. When Transit Plus is unreliable or when snow clearing makes it hard to get out, people miss appointments. They skip social outings and their health really suffers. Every time our

government takes steps to improve accessible transportation and bring health care closer to home, that has a direct impact on our Kildonan-River East neighbours.

Honourable Speaker, another thing I really appreciate about our NDP government's Throne Speech is the focus on trust and on showing up. Before the last election, I heard over and over that people in my riding felt ignored by the failed previous PC government. They did not feel like they could walk into their MLA's office and be heard. They told me that they were tired of feeling like politics was something that happened to them and not with them.

Since election night, I have tried every day to do things differently. It is a new day in Kildonan-River East. That means answering the hard questions at town halls and coffee parties. It means telling people honestly when I do not know the answer, and then immediately going out to find it. It means working with Manitobans in rural constituencies too, even when their opposition MLA sits there and says, ah, there's nothing that can be done.

In my view that's not good enough. Every MLA in this Chamber, no matter which party, has a responsibility to advocate fiercely for their community.

I also cannot ignore the reality that the climate around politics has changed. We have seen frightening, unacceptable incidents at constituency offices, including those of Minister Fontaine and Minister Smith—or the member of Point Douglas and the member for St. Johns (MLA Fontaine). They had unacceptable and frightening incidents occur at their constituency offices.

We have seen rising levels of harassment and threats. It worries me, not just for myself, my family, my staff, but for the future of our province. If good people look at this role and decide that public life is not worth the risk, we all lose.

So while this Throne Speech is about programs and policy, it is also about the kind of province that we want to be. I want my kids and the kids I meet when I read in the classrooms here in Kildonan-River East to see politics as a place where people work hard to solve problems together. That means all of us, inside and outside this Chamber, have to say no to hate, no to imported American-style division and yes to respect, even when we disagree.

Want to bring it back to the people of Kildonan-River East once again. When I'm sitting late at night reading through a stack of emails, it is your stories that keep me going: the senior who wrote to me to say that

a small change in benefits really meant that she could finally afford her medication and a bit of fresh fruit that month; the parent who told me that a new child-care space meant that they could pick up extra shifts and catch up on bills; the newcomer who said that finding community at a neighbourhood event made Kildonan-River East feel like home.

This Speech from the Throne is not perfect; no government document ever will be. But there will be pieces that we debate and improve as we go; but it is grounded in the right priorities, and it reflects a government that is actually listening to what Manitobans are saying.

* (15:20)

I am proud to support our Throne Speech that invests in our children, protects renters, rebuilds health care and respects seniors. I am proud to support a government that believes in showing up for people the way that so many people in my life, including mentors like the late great Harry Schellenberg showed up for me when I was a student right here in River East Transcona School Division.

I will keep bringing the voices of Kildonan-River East to this Chamber. I will keep banging on the table when it comes to seniors, schools and affordability. And I will keep working with anyone on any side of this House who actually wants to show up and to make life better for more Manitobans.

Honourable Speaker, I was a little torn on whether or not to bring up the next piece, but because of how much hate and just frankly nonsense I've seen on social media in the recent days when I made a post about the Trans Day of Remembrance. I take the responsibility as an ally very seriously.

And the Leader of the Opposition couldn't even stand up in this House to acknowledge the guests that were here in the gallery on that very sacred day. He was quoted in CBC on September 19, saying: I see my face in the billboard, you know, during the campaign and—there and I'm proud of that. That's the leader of the Progressive Conservatives, and he was proud to be the face of their divisive previous campaign.

And, honourable Speaker, two years later, nothing has changed. He's still attacking trans kids. He is still dividing Manitobans. And on the recent Trans Day of Remembrance, the PC leader refused to stand to honour members of the trans community in the gallery. Only a handful of PCs stood, while the rest sat. The PC leader had a chance to unify his party and

to affirm the right thing of all Manitobans to be safe and protected. *[interjection]*

And I will take no lessons from the men in opposition that heckle me right at this moment. They heckle their own women in this Chamber, and that is totally unacceptable. And I will not be quiet because you are suggesting that I should.

Instead, their leader—they're heckling me right now because they're ashamed of their leader. Their PC leader doubled down on his hate for the LGBTQ community. And last year, when two-spirit and transgender folks came to a vote, the PC Party of Manitoba was split right down the middle. The members for La Vérendrye (Mr. Narth), Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen), Borderland (Mr. Guenter) and Springfield-Ritchot (Mr. Schuler) voted against this bill. That is so shameful. And the PC leader didn't vote at all in that particular vote.

To the trans kids in Fort Whyte, La Vérendrye, Steinbach, Borderland, Springfield-Ritchot and every community in Manitoba, my message and our government's message is simple: we have your back. Our NDP provincial government has your back and we always will.

So for all my constituents that have different views, I have always brought your concerns to our Chamber when you have varying different views, but there are folks in our community on all sides of the spectrum, and my duty as your representative is to represent all Manitobans.

So thank you so much for this opportunity, honourable Speaker.

Mr. Trevor King (Lakeside): Thank you for the opportunity to rise today to speak to the Throne Speech and the much-needed amendments.

As the representative for Lakeside and as a voice for rural Manitobans—who often feel that their concerns are acknowledged only in passing rather than taken seriously as foundational to the prosperity and identity of this province—when I rise in this House, I do so not out of habit or formality, but because the people I represent expect clarity, accountability and honesty from their government. They expect decisions grounded in practicality, not speeches grounded in aspiration. And they certainly deserve more than what we heard in this year's Throne Speech.

Honourable Deputy Speaker, a throne speech is not simply a ceremonial address, it's to be the blueprint by which a government represents not only its

priorities but its competence, its grasps of the moment, its understanding of what is required and its plan to meet those obligations. It is the government's chance to answer the public's most fundamental question: Are you prepared to govern? Not campaign, not narrate and not inspire—govern.

This Throne Speech did not answer that question. Instead, it offered emotion in place of execution, slogans in place of strategy and recycled announcements in place of new commitments. Manitobans did not send this government here to produce an optimistic vision board. They sent them here to solve real problems with real plans and real timelines. The tone of the speech suggested a government eager to be congratulated for its intentions rather than evaluated on its results.

Honourable Deputy Speaker, my constituents are not motivated by abstract pride. They are motivated by whether they can pay their bills. They're motivated by whether their municipal government can afford to repair aging water infrastructure. They're motivated by whether their children can stay in their home community rather than move away to find opportunity. These are real questions with real consequences, and they require more than aspirations. They require planning, budgeting and follow-through.

That is why this speech was very disappointing, not because ambition is wrong, but because ambition without detail is hollow. The government spoke confidently about rural investment but failed to identify which communities would benefit, what timelines would apply or what revenue sources would support those projects. Rural Manitobans have been hearing this pattern for years. The press release arrives, the ribbon cutting is scheduled, but the actual work is delayed, deferred or downsized. Announcing intent is not the same as executing a project, and rural communities have learned to see the difference.

Consider the continued freeze on Crown land lease rates. It's a good policy, one that provides stability to producers in uncertain times, but it isn't a new policy. It was introduced under the previous Progressive Conservative government, and this government merely chose not to reverse it. I commend that choice, but is not evidence of new direction. It is evidence of coasting on an existing direction. A government that wants credit for continuity should first admit where that continuity came from.

The same is true in health care. We heard this government speak repeatedly about rebuilding rural

health-care services, but rebuilding requires acknowledging the full truth of the past. Under the previous NDP government, led by the Premier's (Mr. Kinew) mentor and confidant, Greg Selinger, 17 rural emergency rooms were closed. That is not conjecture; it is fact. To speak now as though rural health-care services collapsed spontaneously is to erase the lived experience of communities that saw services removed without adequate replacement capacity. If we were to move forward constructively, we must begin with honesty, not selective memory.

Health-care improvements do not happen because they are described; they happen because they are funded, staffed and planned with precision. A throne speech that describes health-care progress in emotional terms but fails to provide timelines for reopened services or commitments to specific communities is not a strategy.

Now, let me speak to municipalities, honourable Deputy Speaker, because if there was one area where this speech failed to meet the moment, it is in municipal finance. Municipalities across Manitoba have been surrounded—have been sounding the alarm for years. The current funding infrastructure is outdated, unstable and insufficient to manage down-loaded responsibilities.

Municipalities do not need symbolic recognition; they need predictable, legislated funding tied to inflation and population growth. They need revenue tools that reflect the realities of infrastructure management, and they need relief from provincial taxation on their own expenditures.

When a municipality repairs a road, they pay PST. When they expand a lagoon, they pay PST. When they build an arena, they pay PST. This is not a tax on consumers; it is a tax on communities. It drains local budgets and limits service delivery. It simply does not make sense for a provincial government to hand municipalities money with one hand and then quietly claw a portion of it back through PST with the other. These municipal expenditures are providing essential public infrastructure, yet every time they invest in those core services, the Province takes a cut. This is an avoidable drain on local budgets that leaves municipalities with fewer dollars to actually deliver the services people rely on.

* (15:30)

The logic breaks down even further when you consider that the Province is essentially cycling the same money around the system and pretending it is

new revenue. Municipalities receive funding allocations, plan responsible projects and then must pay PST on those very same projects. It is the fiscal equivalent of taking money out of one pocket and congratulating yourself for putting it into another.

The Province can say it supports infrastructure investment, but if it's taxing those investments on the back end, the support is more symbolic than real. Many ways, it mirrors the old expression about stealing from Peter to pay Paul, except, here, both Peter and Paul are in the same community.

Municipalities are left financing provincial coffers with money that was supposed to strengthen roads, water systems, recreation facilities and local development. Recycled dollars do not build new infrastructure and circular funding is not a substitute for a modern, sustainable revenue framework.

If this government truly valued municipal partnership, it would stop taxing municipal projects and let local governments keep the full benefit of the dollars already meant for them.

This Throne Speech, despite speaking warmly about partnership, offered no change, no funding escalator, no PST reform and no structural fix. The government claims it stands with workers, yet it continues to defend a payroll tax that punishes the very act of employing them. It is a tax that grows not from profit, but from the simple decision to give someone a job. When employers expand their teams, the government takes more. When they raise wages to reward hard work or keep pace with inflation, the government takes more again.

No matter how often this tax is dressed up as harmless or routine, its structure is fundamentally at odds with a Province that says it wants to encourage growth, productivity and opportunity. The payroll tax is not just a policy flaw; it is a built-in disincentive. Instead of rewarding businesses for creating jobs, it quietly penalizes them for doing so, discourages hiring, discourages expansion and suppresses upward mobility across the labour market.

Manitoba cannot claim to be open for business while maintaining a tax instrument that makes every hiring decision a calculated risk. Employers should not have to choose between investing in their workforce and absorbing yet another cost imposed by the Province, yet businesses tell me regularly that they do exactly that. That can—should concern every member in this House, regardless of our party.

A government cannot say it supports economic growth while keeping a tax that directly undermines it. Manitoba wants to compete. We want to attract investment. If we want more good-paying jobs for Manitobans, then we must stop punishing employers for hiring the very workers in this province that we depend on. A government that says it wants to grow the economy cannot keep a tax designed to prevent growth.

We also heard in the Throne Speech, honourable Deputy Speaker, an assurance—one sentence—claiming commitment to balancing the budget within the government's first term. But there was no fiscal anchor, no expenditure road map, no revenue measures identified and no explanation of how this will occur after running consecutive, increasing deficits.

A commitment without a plan is not a strategy; it is wishful thinking. And Manitobans have every reason to worry about that; add-upset a credible plan. This government may turn to tax increases, perhaps even a PST increase, to close the fiscal gap.

The NDP's latest plan to balance the budget rests on a one-time cigarette settlement windfall, a strategy so flimsy it would be laughable if the consequences weren't so serious. A responsible government does not claim long-term fiscal stability by relying on a legal payout that may arrive months or even years down the road. It is the financial equivalent of counting on winning the lottery to pay next month's rent.

Everyone in this House knows you cannot build a sustainable budget on unpredictable, non-reoccurring money, but this is exactly the type of accounting gimmick the NDP reaches for when their numbers don't add up.

And here is the real danger: they'll book that settlement revenue in their final pre-election budget, regardless of when or when—whether the money actually arrives. They will use that cheque, real or anticipated, to fabricate a balanced budget that exists only on paper. It is a political illusion designed to hide the truth. Their spending is out of control, their deficits are growing and without this windfall, they have no credible path to balance. A budget built on temporary cash is not balance; it's a mirage. Manitobans deserve better than smoke and mirror accounting.

Honourable Deputy Speaker, this habit is not new. The NDP budget by handout, federal bailouts, lawsuit settlements, business levies, and most importantly, the constant handouts they take from Manitoban taxpayers who somehow manage to balance their own

household budgets while the Premier (Mr. Kinew) has both hands in their pockets.

Every day, families know the difference between their money and the government's money. Unfortunately, the Premier does not. He treats Manitobans' hard-earned dollars as his personal slush fund, mistaking other people's sacrifices for his own fiscal virtue. He consistently confuses your name on your paycheque as his own. That is not leadership; that is dependency, and it's time Manitobans saw it for what it really is.

We have seen this movie before, honourable Deputy Speaker. Previous NDP government has promised not to raise the PST. Then they raised it. Manitobans remember, not because they are vindictive, but because they were the ones who paid for that decision. In 2013, the Manitoba NDP delivered one of the most infamous broken promises in the province's fiscal history. After repeatedly assuring Manitobans that they would not raise the provincial sales tax, they did exactly that, increasing the PST from 7 per cent to 8 per cent.

But it wasn't only that hike that outraged Manitobans; it was the method. The NDP deliberately removed the long-standing referendum requirements so they could impose the tax without public approval. Big surprise. A government that had campaigned on respecting families and affordability suddenly decided it knew better than the people footing the bill. It was a textbook example of NDP duplicity: say one thing to win an election, then do the opposite once in power.

The backlash was immediate and intense. Families saw their cost of living go up overnight, businesses saw competitiveness erode, municipalities saw their project budget strained by higher input cost, but the anger ran deeper than the dollars and cents; it was about trust.

Manitobans realized that they had a government willing to rewrite the rules, break its word and raid their wallets to cover its own fiscal mismanagement rather than tightening their own spending. The NDP tightened the screws on taxpayers.

PST hike became the defining symbol of a government that had lost touch with the realities of ordinary Manitobans and believed tax hikes were the simplest solution to every problem that they created. And here's the most telling part: despite the political firestorm they unleashed, the NDP never reversed the tax increase. They kept the PST at 8 per cent until the day Manitobans voted them out.

It was the Progressive Conservatives, not the NDP, who restored the PST to 7 per cent, keeping that key election promise and demonstrating respect for taxpayers. The contrast matters.

When the NDP face budget pressure, they reach for your wallet. When they can't balance the books, and they rarely can, they default to higher taxes, fees and levies, always insisting it's just this once or for a good cause.

History makes the pattern unmistakable: the NDP will say whatever they need to say before an election, but once in power they will raise taxes, break promises and expect Manitobans to bear the consequences. If they did it before, they will do it again. Rest assured, under the NDP, tax hikes are not a possibility; they are a guarantee.

Now, honourable Deputy Speaker, I want to address something deeper than individual policies. There's a tone in this Throne Speech that suggests a government eager to inspire, but not eager to govern. There's a difference between leadership and performance, between empathy and action, between narrative and responsibility. Campaigning is about aspirations; governing is about trade-offs. When you're in government, you must concern yourself with policy, not politics. You have to do what is right, not what will get the most hits on Instagram. Most importantly, you need to govern in the best interest of Manitobans, not for special interests.

Manitobans do not need a government that only writes uplifting speeches; they need a government that makes difficult decisions, that prioritizes spending, defends industries, invests in infrastructure even when there is no political credit to be gained. They need a government that understands that leadership is not measured by applause, but by outcome.

* (15:40)

And this is where the confidence enters the conversation. Confidence is not simply a parliamentary term, it is a public verdict. A government must hold the confidence of this House, but more importantly, it must hold the confidence of those who elected us.

Confidence is earned through transparency, through delivery, through honesty and what is possible and what is not. When a government speaks often about intentions but rarely about execution, confidence does begin to erode; when it celebrates announcements more than completions, confidence erodes; when it claims ownership on policies initiated by others, confidence erodes; when it promises balance yet

produces deficits, confidence erodes. Confidence is not lost in a single moment; it is lost through accumulated disappointment.

I worry that Manitobans are beginning to lose confidence in this government, not out of anger, not out of—but out of fatigue. People do not demand perfection, but they do expect coherence. They expect a government's words align with its actions. They expect a Throne Speech to map out a path forward, not simply remind them of what they already know: that Manitoba is a province worth loving. We agree on that point, but pride is not a substitute for policy.

Honourable Speaker, there comes a point where government must choose whether it wants to be popular or whether it wants to be responsible. The Throne Speech we heard leaned heavily towards popularity, broad statements of shared values, emotional language, ceremonial gestures.

But governing requires more than that. It requires measurable targets, fiscal discipline, transparent timelines and, above all, the willingness to say no; no to excessive spending and no to underfunded commitments, no to the temptation to promise more than the Province can sustain. A government that always says yes eventually leaves future generations to pay for interest on today's applause.

Now I see I'm running out of time, honourable Deputy Speaker, and I've got many, many more things to talk about with this not-so-exciting Throne Speech. But I do want to say to my constituents it's been an honour here to stand on behalf of Lakeside and all of rural Manitobans, not to oppose for the sake of opposition, but to demand that governments rise to the level of responsibility. Manitobans deserve serious leadership. They deserve a government that works and they deserve a Throne Speech that honours not just their pride, but their needs.

Thank you, honourable Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Diljeet Brar (Burrows): While they worry, we work. While they broke, we build. While they cut, we fund. They closed, we opened. They fired, we hired.

Honourable Deputy Speaker, if you ask me what is beautiful, my answer would be our Throne Speech. If you ask me what is most beautiful, I would say page 2 of the document, where it says that after 155 years Manitoba joined Confederation, our Throne Speech is published in Anishinaabemowin, the language that named our province. That is called positivity. That is real reconciliation. That is respect. That is bringing people together and that's what we

mean when we say one Manitoba. I want to say thanks to my team for taking this wonderful, positive step this year.

Honourable Deputy Speaker, I have a red skirt hanging in my constituency office. A few years back, when I visited my wonderful friend and colleague, the member from Point Douglas's office, she gifted me that. And it's hanging in my office since then.

What I noticed is that people notice it. My constituents and Manitobans who visit my office notice it. And to my surprise, many of them do not know what it signifies.

That's the gap. That's where we need to stand up and fill that gap. That's where there is an opportunity to teach all Canadians, all Manitobans, especially new Canadians, about the history of this country, about colonization that people went through. And I can relate, because the people in the country, in the province where I was born and raised, have experienced the same.

We need to decolonize. We need to stand up for the right things. We need to work together to make things better.

My colleague from the other side just indicated that he worries. Worrying is okay, but on top of worrying about things, the best thing to do is take action, work, and even more important is to work together.

We have done a few things that I'm sure my friends on the opposite side appreciate. If I ask them, do they use Medinav.ca, I'm sure they do. And they appreciate. I've used that to book appointments for my family. My friends have used it. That is one example of how we can make things better.

Health cards, new plastic health cards. Many of my colleagues have ordered new plastic health cards at the same time when they condemn us on health care file. *[interjection]*

My colleague from Lac du Bonnet, who likes me so much, can't wait to stand up and say a few words about the wonderful Throne Speech that I am talking about right now. And my friend from Lac du Bonnet knows that when he speaks, I never heckle or interrupt. I let them complete his speech. I might smile at him. I might stop him in the hallway, sometimes give him a hug and talk about what he said was not appropriate or correct or effective. That's the way I handle things.

Before I forget, I want to give a shout-out to my wonderful colleague from Tuxedo, who showed leadership to work as a nurse on an urgent call a few hours back. I appreciate that; that is leadership. And I'm so proud to work along such colleagues in this Chamber, including all of the members on the other side as well.

* (15:50)

Honourable Deputy Speaker, PCs are bad—okay—PCs are bad is not the title of my speech today. Okay, what's not the title of my speech today? What's not the title of my speech today? PCs are bad is not the title of my speech today. The title of my speech, or the theme of my speech, is: Let's work together and find out the ways to make things better in Manitoba. And we're making that happen. And we are blessed to have that opportunity to lead.

Sometimes I think why that team is sitting on the left side of the Speaker's Chair, is because they did not make choices which were right. So Manitobans said, go to the left. Learn, learn how we work. And where are the role models? Just in front of them, on this side of the Chamber.

I'm pretty sure that members opposite and their families and kids, they appreciate and get benefit out of our Nello's Law, the universal child nutrition program in Manitoba. Even the federal government, they appreciated Manitoba for being the leader on this initiative, and I'm pretty sure the hydro rate freeze pleased members opposite and they availed it and they appreciate it, but they do not stand up and appreciate it while debating. I don't know why.

There are many, many things in our Throne Speech that indicate that things are getting better. We have hired 3,500-plus health-care workers, including doctors, technologists, nurses and so on. When we hire people, we build Manitoba, we build those departments. But when we cut departments, we incapacitate. We refuse to serve people. We refuse to offer what people deserve.

When we talk about personal-care homes, the member from Lac du Bonnet must be happy that we are taking these initiatives, wonderful initiatives, you know, by building personal-care homes. Where? In Lac du Bonnet. Where? In Arborg. Where? In Transcona.

So that's how we build Manitoba. That's how we strengthen our health-care infrastructure. And my friend from Interlake—by the way, I love Interlake because I served in Interlake, and the office I served at, which is the provincial building in Arborg, was

exactly opposite to the member for Interlake-Gimli's (Mr. Johnson) office, just along the river. And we are still opposite. I was his critic; I'm supposed to oppose him; I'm supposed to ask him questions whenever I get a chance.

When I was in opposition I asked him questions about the vet shortage, and in his answers, what would he say? He would talk about Clover the cow. I'm asking about the vet shortage. I'm worried about how we can address the vet shortage in Manitoba.

By the way, let me find a moment to appreciate internationally educated veterinarians working in Manitoba. I know many of them. They are educated somewhere else, outside Canada. They bring that experience. They bring those skills, and they bring that commitment to serve Manitoba. And there are many, many, many serving in this province, especially in Winnipeg.

Even if you randomly knock a vet's door it's likely that they are from Punjab Agricultural University where I went to school. And I feel proud of the fact that people coming from that part of the world and other parts of the world—from Philippines, from Ukraine—they commit to build our province. They commit to build this wonderful country, Canada.

One of my constituents, he's very young. Dr. Nabjot Brar, he was committed to be a veterinarian, being a Manitoban, being a Canadian. After completing his school, he went back to India to get a degree in veterinary sciences, came back, now serving right here in Manitoba. That's the beauty of our province.

And there are so many nurses and doctors who choose to work in Manitoba. I met a doctor recently at an event here in the basement, and the doctor was from LGBTQ community. They shared with me that they feel safer working in Manitoba than down south. They moved from USA.

So that tells us that the choices we are making, the environment we are creating here, the way we are leading is attracting people. Making a province, making a country their home is a big decision, and people are making those decisions. That makes me proud. That makes all of us proud. Because people think that Manitoba is the province that is our destination, that's where we want to serve, that's where we want to build our family.

I have six minutes and six seconds left. I want to talk about a few organizations in my constituency and around.

Many of you might know about MAFTI, Manitoba Association of Filipino Teachers Incorporated. They are 48 years old, and they are an important organization not just in the Filipino community, but in Manitoba as a whole. I got a chance to attend their AGM recently, and I saw the energy, the humility, the empathy, the sense of service that those leaders had. And they're embracing the new Canadian families who want to be educators in Manitoba. I wanted to give a shout-out to members of MAFTI.

A day before yesterday, I got a chance to stop with a group, which is a Bisayan group from Philippines. So they speak a different language, which is Bisayan language, a little bit different from Tagalog. They share some vocabulary, but it's a different one. They are preparing for an upcoming event. They are preparing a dance and choreography. I loved being there. And I met Tita [*aunt*] Gloria there. She gave me a tight hug and she welcomed me there. That is Manitoba. That's positivity. That's love that we spread around us.

And I want to give a shout-out to a newly established organization in my constituency and around by South Asian educators. They are called South Asian educators of Manitoba. Best wishes on your establishment and looking forward to do many, many positive things.

I also want to say thank you to the Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe), to the Minister of Health, Minister of Education, for bringing the changes they have brought in the last two years. That's what people were expecting. That's what people are appreciating. And I want to appreciate all my colleagues for doing their part to achieve the goals that we want to achieve together.

* (16:00)

When I talk about public safety, I think about police officers; I think about cadets; I also think about Legislative Protective Services. And I also talk about, think about, the people who are working in private security organizations. I want to appreciate for what they're doing for Manitoba. And I want to give a special shout-out to the people from BIPOC and visible minority communities working as safety officers and public safety—in public safety positions.

I want to give a special shout-out to home-based child-care centres in Burrows and beyond. There is another group that I appreciate and I met a couple of times is Filipino home-based daycare and child-care educators.

Honourable Deputy Speaker, there is a lot to say. There is a lot that I want to say, but this is an opportunity which is a limited time slot that we are provided. I just want to say thank you for this opportunity, and I want to wish everybody all the best while serving in these positions of privilege.

Thank you so much.

Mr. Wayne Balcaen (Brandon West): I'm happy to provide some remarks on behalf of the great people of Brandon West.

Last year, I started my Throne Speech out talking about the fact that the NDP offered the three Rs: the reduce, reuse and recycle. They reduced funding in services. They reused all the PC announcements and the whole Throne Speech was meant to be recycled right into that recycling bin.

This year, it's not a lot different, honourable Deputy Speaker. A throne speech, t-h-r-o-n-e, is a formal document that opens a new session of the Legislature and outlines the government's agenda for the coming year. It is written by government but delivered by the monarch's representative, the Lieutenant Governor. Unfortunately, this Premier (Mr. Knew) got the wrong memo and wrote a thrown speech, t-h-r-o-w-n, which was quickly thrown into the garbage, into the landfill, never to surface again. That's how this Throne Speech was: reduce, reuse, recycle, and this one is just thrown out. I think we see a pattern here.

I want to start talking about my role as the critic for Justice and public safety and the absolute dismal failures of this government as we talk about the amendments to the Throne Speech, specifically item F. They misrepresented the provincial government's record on public safety as crime rates, drug trafficking and violent incidents continue to rise in many communities across the province, with no comprehensive strategy to tackle root causes or support law enforcement.

I have five examples that I would like to go through that represent why we had to bring this amendment forward.

Let's start with the very first one that everybody knows and talks about, and that's the promise to fix bail within the first 100 days.

Well, honourable Speaker, we're now two years in, and bail has not been fixed. But don't worry: this Premier and his Justice Minister said they could do it all alone. They didn't need anybody's help. But, alas, the Justice Minister just a few months ago was in

Ottawa begging and pleading with them to please listen and please help them out because they could not do it alone.

Matter of fact, things have only gotten worse under this NDP government. The rising in crime; the youth crime rate is out of this world. We're having individuals running around downtown Winnipeg and other jurisdictions causing havoc because they know that this system is a revolving door under this NDP government.

The next one, honourable Deputy Speaker, is from last year's budget speech, and the minister said we will stop violent crime. I don't know; every day I look in the paper, every day I listen to the news, every day I watch the news on TV, crime is front and centre, and it's worse than ever. It's only getting worse under this NDP government and this Justice Minister. Skyrocketing crime; as I mentioned, brazen daytime robbery sprees; a bus driver who was shot during the day; and a youth crime that is reaching epidemic proportions, all under this NDP government.

Number 2, and, you know, I would like to bring this forward on behalf of the member for Swan River (Mr. Wowchuk) because his area was offered a GIS section on November 21, 2024. So that's two years—or, sorry, a year and two days ago, and what's happened? I'll ask the Justice Minister: Has that unit been stood up? And I'll answer for him: the answer is no. So perhaps he meant to announce it this year, and perhaps within the year now that unit will stand forward.

He knows—he knows—that the RCMP does not have the capacity to support these additional units. It was all photo ops and opportunities and slogans for this government to say, we're fixing crime. That was their response to the drug issues that were happening up in Swan River, and again, nothing has been done on that file. As a matter of fact, the two constables for the position have not even been considered yet by the RCMP.

Let's look at failed promise No. 3: \$250,000 funding province for the Province to staff up their strategic initiative of a crime reduction unit in Thompson. And I'm sure the member from Thompson is embarrassed equally and probably brings it forward to his caucus quite often and says: How come you made these promises? How come you falsely promised to the people of Manitoba that you would bring this unit forward right away, and here we are. April 10 it was promised, a crime reduction unit in Thompson, and again, no delivery.

Again, photo ops, splashy headlines; the minister goes up to Thompson, makes the announcements; the minister goes to Swan River, makes the announcements: I'm here to save the North. But he does nothing for them. This government is all promises and no action when it comes to crime and public safety.

Let's also look at a \$3-million investment in the RCMP's tactical response unit, the TRU team, which is important, and I will absolutely agree with that. The unfortunate part is that they can't staff this. And this was their response to rural crime. This came out right after, immediately after the incident that happened in MacGregor, where armed individuals shot up a farmyard and, with impunity, went there to steal vehicles and cause harm.

* (16:10)

The minister's reaction was: you know what, we'll support you with a tactical response unit, which is very, very much needed for the RCMP and for rural areas. The problem is it was all photo ops and highlights again, because the minister knows that the RCMP does not have the resources available to staff up these units.

So now we've got the Swan River RCMP promising a GIS unit; that was three members. We've got the Thompson crime reduction unit of four members, so my math, that's seven and nine more for this tactical response team. That's 16 members and the RCMP has not gained enough members to support any of these initiatives. They're already 30 and approaching 40 per cent vacancy in their areas under this NDP government. And that, folks, is the answer is what's happening to rural crime here in Manitoba. It is going absolutely sideways because it's all promises and no actions.

I'll be the first to say I support the RCMP and policing across the board. They do great work, but they can't continue to do the great work when they're not properly staffed by this NDP government and this Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe). It's important that you actually offer solutions rather than just talking points.

Let's talk about safety in hospitals, honourable Deputy Speaker, and that's another issue that we're seeing across the province. The safety in hospitals is deplorable. We have now two hospitals that are greylisted, and I don't do it justice speaking about greylisting, but my understanding is that it's so unsafe that people won't take shifts or they're encouraged not

to take the extra shifts. And it's only happened when this NDP government is in power.

And you know what? They can talk about all of the safety measures that they want in hospitals, but it's only getting worse under this government. And you know what? I'll even read from an article published today in the Winnipeg Free Press that says: Knife-wielding man arrested in Swan Valley Health Centre. Officers used a taser on a knife-wielding man who'd locked himself in the emergency room bathroom on Sunday, the RCMP say. Swan River officers were sent to the Swan Valley Health Centre at about 2:30 p.m. They opened the door to find a man holding the knife. The man, who is known to police, was not a patient at the hospital at the time.

This is the security that is offered to individuals in hospitals, in health-care facilities, under this government. We've seen it before when shots are fired in the Thompson hospital on Christmas Eve, where people are stabbed, where knives are brought forward and now we're looking at, again, Swan River has a knife-wielding individual inside of their emergency facility. This isn't getting better, honourable Deputy Speaker. This is only getting worse under this government.

One last piece is let's talk about the Chicken Little scream that happened about the 72-hour detention centre. We heard in the last session how very important it was to get this set up, how urgent it was, how the PCs were blocking this when they brought forward reasonable proper amendments that would've accounted for the safety and the well-being of individuals there. They screamed, they cried, they professed that this had to be set up immediately. And what happened during that time? We came back—oh, we can't set this up because we're not ready yet.

So how much urgency was really there when Chicken Little was crying and screaming that this needed to be done? Very little urgency.

And as a matter of fact, we saw it on the Leg. here on the grounds, where people were protesting yesterday. They were out here saying: How come these amendments that were brought forward by the PC government weren't listened to, weren't adhered to, weren't followed because that would've ensured safety for individuals being brought to this detention centre for 72 hours.

And I know, speaking from experience, what people go through with a 24-hour detention. And now this is going to be done for three days under this NDP

government. So it's a concern. It is a viable concern that individuals have within our province.

Brandon West, my constituents, I'd like to talk to you now about some of the issues that have happened in Brandon that really are concerning for me. And if we look at our amendment J, when it says the provincial government has ignored the urgent needs of Manitoba students, with declining educational outcomes, teacher shortages and a lack of clear standards or assessability for improving classroom support. Simply put, Brandon School Division is underfunded.

This year, we saw reports come forward from a public hearing that the board chair and the board vice-chair spoke strongly about the lack of funding coming from this NDP government when it came to the Brandon School Division and educational needs. A 10 per cent increase is likely a best-case scenario. And I'll quote: This is bad. This is really bad. This NDP government is bad. It's really bad.

That's what's happening here: mismanagement of these funds, a burden on my ratepayers as well as all ratepayers in Brandon. And I must say, the NDP has never met a tax that they didn't like.

Let's talk about item C, mismanaged—or, misstated progress in the health-care system while Manitobans continue to face unacceptable emergency room wait times, closed rural services, long surgical backlogs and a worsening shortage of front-line staff in many regions.

Well, the Brandon regional health authority under Prairie Mountain Health, this past year we've seen many times where they've been put on diversion. What that means is they don't have the capacity to take emergency cases at Brandon Regional Health Centre, which is the regional hub for this area. They don't have the capacity. They had no obstetrics for a 24-hour period. So people that were expecting a child had to look at a long drive to Winnipeg in order to have their birth. That put many people in jeopardy during that time.

And let's not forget that the Brandon Regional Health Centre, for the first time in its history, had no surgical capacity for a 24-hour period for general surgery. That allowed anybody with any sort of internal ailment, somebody who has been stabbed, somebody who's been shot, somebody who has a major internal dilemma could not get that surgery.

And what was this Minister of Health's solution? Well, we'll triage you and let you sit in pain for 24 hours until the next surgeon is on, or we'll jump in

an ambulance and you can ride in pain to either Dauphin or Winnipeg but only—only—if they had the capacity to take that individual there. The health care under this government is only getting worse.

And one last one that I want to talk about that impacts my residents and all residents of Brandon is failing to address—under our amendment D, failing to address the growing cost-of-living crisis, offering short-term rhetoric instead of long-term affordability measures, leaving families, seniors, farmers and small businesses without meaningful relief.

* (16:20)

Honourable Deputy Speaker, the growing affordability crisis is only increasing under this NDP government. It's getting worse and there is no arguments with that. I'll reference Helping Hands in Brandon that is now serving 5,000 more hot meals this year to individuals because they can't afford the cost of living under this NDP government. They can't afford groceries; they can't afford hot meals, but they can be supported by Helping Hands.

I called on this government, and I was hoping I would see something in the Throne Speech, but unfortunately I didn't see anything offered for Helping Hands in Brandon, the only place that offers hot meals for our people that are suffering food insecurity.

And only a few short blocks downtown, the help—or sorry, the Samaritan House Ministries is providing hundreds more hampers to residents of Brandon because they can't afford to eat; they can't afford this government. They're having to go and get these hampers and having to go and get the extra help that is put onto them.

Let's not forget that each family, 48 per cent, I believe it was, are \$200 shy of insolvency, \$200 shy of bankruptcy. And if you're living in your own home, if you're a senior in Brandon West, if you're somebody who's just starting out, I understand what you're going through. I understand that \$200, to this government, doesn't mean a lot, but to you it's the difference between bankruptcy and insolvency and it could mean the difference between paying your bills, buying groceries, helping your children or making sure that those payments are made.

It's not fair to you, Brandon West residents. It's not fair to residents of Manitoba, and I'm hoping that this government throws this speech into the garbage and starts looking after you.

Thank you.

French spoken

MLA Robert Loiselle (St. Boniface): Monsieur l'Honorable Député Président, c'est un honneur et un réel plaisir d'avoir la chance de m'exprimer sur notre excellent discours du trône, qui avance les priorités des Manitobains et des Manitobaines, ainsi que les résidents de Saint-Boniface.

Je suis extrêmement fier de faire partie d'un gouvernement, d'ailleurs, qui a avancé le discours du trône, non seulement en anglais, en français, mais pour la première fois dans l'histoire du Manitoba, en Anishinaabemowin. Étant un Métis de la rivière Rouge, en avançant le discours du trône dans une langue autochtone, on existe et on voit un lien direct entre l'histoire de Louis Riel, le premier Premier ministre du Manitoba, et le fait qu'on doit respecter les cultures autochtones, et ainsi que les cultures canadiennes.

On sait que la langue est le véhicule pour la culture, et maintenant je suis fier de voir que le discours du trône est maintenant disponible en trois langues.

Alors, j'aimerais aussi partager que notre discours du trône avance aussi le rêve de Louis Riel de créer une province véritablement bilingue, multiculturelle et autochtone.

Mais la priorité la plus importante de notre gouvernement, c'est naturellement les soins de santé.

Donc, notre gouvernement néo-démocrate sait que les soins de santé sont le fondement d'un Manitoba fort et équitable. Nous avons écouté les familles, les personnes âgées, les communautés du Nord et rurales, les partenaires autochtones, le personnel de première ligne et les patients. Et nous avons entendu le même message : les gens veulent des soins rapides et de haute qualité près de chez eux, dispensés par des travailleurs respectés qui 'bénéficient' du soutien et des outils dont ils ont besoin.

C'est pourquoi les soins de santé sont au cœur même de notre plan pour bâtir un Manitoba uni, au même titre que l'accessibilité financière et la sécurité publique. Un plan stratégique dirigé par des médecins est actuellement mis en œuvre afin de réduire les temps d'attente aux urgences, d'améliorer le flux des patients et d'assurer que les gens sont pris en charge par les bons prestataires au bon moment. Cela signifie moins d'heures d'attente dans les couloirs, des soins plus rapides pour les cas d'urgent et un système qui fonctionne lorsque les familles en ont le plus besoin.

Après des années de coupures budgétaires qui ont vidé notre système de santé de sa substance, nous reconstruisons également la main-d'œuvre afin que les Manitobains puissent compter sur des soins lorsqu'ils en ont besoin. Au cours des deux dernières années, nous avons embauché non moins que 3 500 nouveaux employés dans le secteur de la santé : c'est absolument phénoménal. Nous fournissons davantage d'infirmiers au chevet des patients, davantage de médecins dans les cliniques et davantage de professionnels paramédicaux pour soutenir des équipes de soin afin de réduire les temps d'attente, et de permettre les patients d'être pris en charge plus rapidement.

Nos investissements sont dans les soins des aînés afin que ceux-ci puissent vivre la dignité, que leurs familles se sentent en sécurité. Trois nouveaux – Trois nouvelles – excusez – résidences de soins personnels sont en cours de construction, soit à Lac-du-Bonnet, Arborg et Transcona. Ces résidences permettront aux personnes âgées de bénéficier du niveau de soins approprié dans leur propre communauté, réduiront les longs trajets pour les familles et allégeront la pression sur les hôpitaux en assurant une transition plus harmonieuse entre les soins actifs et le soutien à long terme.

Nous avons également ouvert quatre nouvelles cliniques de soins primaires aux heures prolongées : à l'Hôpital Grace, à l'Hôpital Concordia, à l'Hôpital Saint-Boniface – évidemment – et à l'Hôpital Victoria. Ces cliniques aident les familles à obtenir des rendez-vous plus rapidement, à gérer les maladies chroniques et – avant qu'elles ne deviennent des urgences, et à éviter les visites inutiles aux urgences.

La clinique pour blessures et maladies mineures de Brandon offre également davantage de possibilités de consulter un professionnel de la santé sans manquer le travail ou l'école, et contribue à réduire le nombre de visites non urgentes aux urgences du Centre régional de santé de Brandon.

Les Manitobains ont également fait savoir qu'ils souhaitent un système de santé qui leur inspire confiance – c'est important – et leur témoignage du respect. C'est pourquoi nous 'intrusions' une charte de la sécurité des patients, afin de consacrer dans la loi le droit à des soins sûrs et de haute qualité. Cela permettra d'établir des normes claires et de garantir que les patients et leurs familles sachent à quoi s'attendre chaque fois qu'ils se rendent dans un établissement de la santé.

Nous mettons fin aux heures supplémentaires obligatoires pour les professionnels de santé, à commencer par les infirmiers, car la sécurité des soins dépend de la sécurité du personnel. Ce changement permettra d'éviter l'épuisement professionnel, de conserver le personnel expérimenté dans le système, et de garantir que les patients soient pris en charge par des équipes reposées et prêtes à fournir les meilleurs soins possibles.

Nous légiférons également pour améliorer le ratio personnel/patient afin que la charge de travail soit gérable et que les soins ne soient pas précipités. Afin de rendre les soins plus pratiques et plus abordables, nous avons élargi le champ d'activités des pharmaciens : ils peuvent désormais prescrire des médicaments pour les 'mals' courants, les infections urinaires et la contraception, y compris la contraception gratuite. Cela permet aux familles d'économiser du temps et de l'argent, tout en réduisant la pression sur les cliniques et les services d'urgence.

Nous mettons en place une communauté pour la sécurité des patients, renforçons la sécurité dans les établissements de santé et mettons en place des mesures de prévention plus strictes afin d'empêcher des incidents violents avant qu'ils ne se produisent.

Les travailleurs de la santé méritent de savoir qu'ils peuvent faire leur travail, rentrer chez eux après, auprès de leur famille et avoir confiance que leur lieu de travail les protégera. Tout acte de violence est inacceptable, et notre gouvernement prend des mesures pour s'assurer que cela ne se 'reproduisera' plus jamais.

* (16:30)

Les Manitobains nous ont demandé de réduire les formalités administratives et de moderniser le système. Les cartes de santé numériques sont ici, vont faciliter l'accès aux soins et réduire les tracas administratifs pour les familles et le personnel.

Parallèlement, un nouveau portail sécurisé permettra aux patients d'accéder facilement à leurs résultats et d'analyse et leurs carnets de vaccination, ce qui les aidera à gérer leurs plans de soins et à éviter le 'déblouble' – le dédoublement des résultats d'examen.

Nous apportons également des changements sensibles afin de réduire les visites inutiles et les coûts. Les certificats médicaux ne seront plus exigés pour les sept premiers jours d'un léger malaise. Cela permettra de libérer du temps pour les médecins, de raccourcir la liste d'attente et de faire gagner du temps et de l'argent aux familles : c'est évident.

Nous renforçons aussi les interventions d'urgence en permettant aux services paramédicaux d'ajouter des interventions médicales d'urg – excusez – d'urgence à leur équipe. Ces intervenants recevront une formation au sein de la communauté, ce qui permettra de créer des capacités locales, de réduire les délais d'intervention et de leur offrir des perspectives de carrière au service de leur communauté.

Nous avons également mis en place un programme de formation direct pour les technologues en IRM afin d'accélérer l'entrée de professionnels qualifiés dans le système de santé ici au Manitoba. Grâce à l'augmentation du nombre de technologie – technologues diplômés, les patients n'auront plus à attendre des semaines pour passer des examens médicaux essentiels.

Pour la première fois, une promotion complète d'ambulanciers – et j'en suis très fier – paramédicaux spécialisés en soins avancés obtiendra son diplôme, et nous les embaucherons tous ici près de chez nous. Cet investissement renforce des soins préhospitaliers et améliore les résultats dans les situations d'urgence.

Nous élargissons le soutien à l'allaitement maternel aussi, qui est un élément essentiel de la santé des femmes. Des consultantes en lactation sont désormais disponibles pour aider les nouveaux parents à prendre un bon départ et à prévenir les complications pendant une période cruciale pour la santé du nourrisson et de la mère.

Nous formons et embauchons davantage de sages-femmes, y compris pour la première fois dans la région de l'Entre-lacs afin d'améliorer les soins prénataux, obstétricaux et postnataux, en particulier dans les communautés qui attendent depuis trop longtemps des services disponibles localement.

Nous ré-établissons également les services d'accouchement à Norway House afin que les familles puissent accueillir une nouvelle vie dans leur propre communauté et réduire les déplacements médicaux coûteux et perturbateurs.

Nous introduisons la Loi sur l'accessibilité pour les Manitobains afin de rendre notre province véritablement inclusive pour tous, et nous en sommes très fiers.

Tout ce que nous faisons commence par l'écoute. Nous avons rencontré des infirmières, des médecins, des ambulanciers, paramédicaux, des sages-femmes, des aides-soignants, des pharmaciens et des professionnels paramédicaux. Nous avons discuté avec des patients, des soignants et des défenseurs.

Nous nous sommes rendus dans les communautés rurales du Nord éloignées, et nous avons fait appel à des leaders autochtones pour concevoir des solutions qui reflètent les réalités locales.

Les Manitobains ont demandé des soins rapides, des lieux de travail plus sûrs, des outils modernes et le respect de ceux qui les servent, et c'est exactement ce que nous leur offrons. Lorsque les soins sont accessibles et sûrs, lorsque les travailleurs sont respectés et lorsque les familles peuvent obtenir de l'aide sans aller vers leur perte, nous sommes plus forts ensemble. C'est ainsi que nous construisons un Manitoba uni.

Enfin, les soins de santé et l'accessibilité financière et la sécurité publique ne sont pas des dossiers distincts : ils se renforcent mutuellement. Notre gouvernement s'engage à tenir ses promesses dans ces trois domaines, en prenant les soins de santé comme point d'ancrage et en se laissant guider par la voix des Manitobains.

Translation

Honourable Deputy Speaker, it is an honour and a real pleasure to have the opportunity to speak about our excellent Throne Speech, which advances the priorities of Manitobans and the residents of St. Boniface.

I am extremely proud to be part of a government that delivered the Throne Speech not only in English and French, but also, for the first time in Manitoba's history, in Anishinaabemowin. Speaking as a Red River Métis, presenting the Throne Speech in an Indigenous language shows that we exist and highlights the direct link between the history of Louis Riel, Manitoba's first premier, and the fact that we must respect Indigenous cultures, as well as Canadian cultures.

We know that language is the vehicle for culture, and now I am proud to see that the Throne Speech is available in three languages.

I would also like to share that our Throne Speech advances Louis Riel's dream of creating a truly bilingual, multicultural and Indigenous province.

But our government's most important priority is, of course, health care.

Our New Democratic Party government knows that health care is the foundation of a strong and equitable Manitoba. We have listened to families, seniors, northern and rural communities, Indigenous partners, front-line staff and patients. And we have heard the

same message: people want timely, high-quality care close to home, delivered by respected workers who have the support and tools they need.

That is why health care is at the very heart of our plan to build one Manitoba, along with affordability and public safety. A physician-led strategic plan is now being implemented to reduce wait times in emergency rooms, improve patient flow and ensure people are seen by the right providers at the right time. That means fewer hours waiting in hallways, faster care for urgent cases and a system that works when families need it most.

After years of budget cuts that have hollowed out our health-care system, we are also rebuilding the workforce so Manitobans can count on care when they need it. Over the past two years, we have hired no fewer than 3,500 new employees in the health-care sector: that is absolutely phenomenal. We are providing more nurses at the bedside, more doctors in clinics, and more allied health professionals to support care teams in order to reduce wait times and allow patients to be treated more quickly.

Our investments are in senior care so that seniors can live with dignity, and their families can feel secure. Three new—excuse me—personal-care residences are under construction in Lac du Bonnet, Arborg and Transcona. These residences will allow seniors to receive the appropriate level of care in their own communities, reduce long commutes for families and ease the pressure on hospitals by ensuring a smoother transition between acute care and long-term support.

We have also opened four new extended-hours primary care clinics: at the Grace Hospital, Concordia Hospital, St. Boniface Hospital—of course—and Victoria Hospital. These clinics help families get appointments faster, manage chronic conditions before they become emergencies and avoid unnecessary visits to the ER.

The Brandon Minor Injury and Illness Clinic also provides more opportunities to see a health-care professional without missing work or school and helps reduce the number of non-urgent visits to the Brandon Regional Health Centre emergency room.

Manitobans have also made it clear that they want a health-care system they can trust—that's important—and that treats them with respect. That's why we are introducing a patient safety charter to enshrine in law the right to safe, high-quality care. This will establish clear standards and ensure that patients and their families know what to expect every time they visit a health-care facility.

We are ending mandatory overtime for health-care professionals, starting with nurses, because the safety of care depends on the safety of staff. This change will prevent burnout, keep experienced staff in the system and ensure that patients are cared for by teams that are rested and ready to provide the best possible care.

We are also introducing legislation to improve staff-to-patient ratios so that workloads are manageable and care is not rushed. To make care more convenient and affordable, we have expanded the scope of practice for pharmacists: they can now prescribe medications for common ailments, urinary tract infections and contraception, including free contraception. This saves families time and money, while reducing pressure on clinics and emergency services.

We are building a community for patient safety, strengthening security in health-care facilities and implementing stricter prevention measures to stop violent incidents before they happen.

Health-care workers deserve to know that they can do their jobs, go home afterwards to their families, and trust that their workplace will protect them. Any act of violence is unacceptable, and our government is taking steps to ensure that it never happens again.

Manitobans have asked us to reduce red tape and modernize the system. Digital health cards are here, and they will make it easier to access care and reduce administrative hassles for families and staff.

At the same time, a new secure portal will give patients easy access to their test results and vaccination records, helping them manage their care plans and avoid duplication of test results.

We are also making significant changes to reduce unnecessary visits and costs. Medical certificates will no longer be required for the first seven days of a minor illness. This will free up time for doctors, shorten waiting lists and save families time and money—it's a given.

We are also strengthening emergency response by allowing paramedic services to add urgent—excuse me—emergency medical responders to their teams. These responders will be trained within the community, which will build local capacity, reduce response times, and offer them career opportunities serving their community.

We have also implemented a direct training program for MRI technologists to accelerate the entry of qualified professionals into the health-care system here in Manitoba. With the increase in the number of

certified technologists, patients will no longer have to wait weeks for essential medical exams.

For the first time, a full class of paramedics—and I am very proud of this—specializing in advanced care will graduate, and we will hire them all here close to home. This investment strengthens pre-hospital care and improves outcomes in emergency situations.

We are also expanding support for breastfeeding, which is an essential part of women's health. Lactation consultants are now available to help new parents get off to a good start and prevent complications during a crucial period for the health of both infant and mother.

We are training and hiring more midwives, including for the first time in the Interlake region, to improve prenatal, obstetric, and postnatal care, particularly in communities that have waited too long for locally available services.

We are also reestablishing birthing services in Norway House so that families can welcome new life into their own community and reduce costly and disruptive medical travel.

We are introducing The Accessibility for Manitobans Act to make our province truly inclusive for all, and we are very proud of this.

Everything we do starts with listening. We met with nurses, doctors, paramedics, midwives, nursing assistants, pharmacists and allied health professionals. We talked with patients, caregivers and advocates. We have travelled to remote rural communities in the North, and we have engaged with Indigenous leaders to design solutions that reflect local realities.

Manitobans asked for timely care, safer workplaces, modern tools and respect for those who serve them, and that's exactly what we're delivering. When care is accessible and safe, when workers are respected, and when families can get help without going broke, we are stronger together. That's how we build one Manitoba.

Finally, health care, affordability and public safety are not separate issues: they reinforce each other. Our government is committed to delivering on all three, with health care as our anchor and Manitobans as our guide.

English

Furthermore, honourable Speaker, we are investing in emergency and cardiac care at St. Boniface

Hospital. In fact, this is a proud moment for St. Boniface and for Manitoba.

The first phase of our new emergency department is now open and it's already changing how care is delivered in moments that matter most. When you walk through those doors at the new St. Boniface ER, you'll see what listening to patients looks like. Expanded waiting and triage areas, private exam rooms for dignity and a dedicated mental health space because every Manitoban deserves care that is timely and respectful, in both English et, à l'Hôpital de Saint-Boniface, en français [*at St. Boniface Hospital, in French*].

We brought diagnostic imaging right into the ER, a new CT scanner, and extra machines means faster answers and quicker treatment without the delays of moving patients across the hospital. Ambulances also have a newly dedicated 10-bay entrance. I visited it the other day; it's incredible, with a direct elevator link from the arrival area to the emergency department and second-floor cardiac intervention suites, ensuring faster, more efficient patient transfers in critical moments.

This projects reflects the heart of St. Boniface— inclusive design, community partnership and generosity. The St. Boniface Hospital, in fact, foundation raised \$10 million to make this possible. Merci à tous. [*Thank you to everyone.*] Full completion is coming in 2026, but already families are feeling the difference.

And we're not stopping there. We've promised better cardiac care and we're delivering. A cardiac centre of excellence at St. Boniface Hospital is bringing surgery, cardiology and rehabilitation together under one roof, so patients get seamless care and Manitoba leads in heart health.

This centre means faster access for life-saving procedures, more capacity for urgent cases and a hub for innovation, supporting research and training that will keep Manitoba at the forefront of cardiac care. Bravo.

After hearing heartbreaking stories of families left waiting too long for surgery, we acted. New protocols guaranteed, clear communications on surgical timelines and public reporting because no family should ever be left in the dark. Manitoba already ranks amongst the best for cardiac outcomes, but we're raising the bar: more staff, better technology and stronger accountability so urgent cases meet national benchmarks and elective procedures don't fall through the cracks.

This is about safety and trust. When care is close to home and delivered with compassion, we build a healthier Manitoba, ensemble [*together*], together.

French spoken

Monsieur l'honorable Député Président, au niveau de la Francophonie manitobaine, nous sommes en bonne voie de faire du Manitoba une province véritablement bilingue.

Au cours des six derniers mois, nous avons écouté les communautés francophones sur l'étendue du Manitoba et partagerons bientôt les résultats de ces consultations, ainsi que les prochaines étapes que nous comptons mettre en œuvre pour produire – pour traduire ces précieuses conversations en actions concrètes.

En décembre, nous ouvrirons également de nouveaux bureaux à Saint-Boniface, afin d'offrir des services juridiques en français et de rendre la justice plus accessible aux familles de notre communauté.

Nous franchissons aussi également une étape importante sur la scène internationale : le Manitoba soumettra sa candidature pour adhérer à l'Organisation internationale de la Francophonie. Il s'agit de célébrer notre identité et de renforcer nos liens avec les communautés francophones du monde entier.

Ensemble, nous bâtissons une province qui reflète nos valeurs : la solidarité, l'inclusion et la fierté de nos deux langues officielles.

Finalement, en ce qui en est de rendre la vie plus abordable, notre gouvernement comprend que les familles ressentent chaque jour le coût de la vie. C'est pourquoi maintenir un coût de la vie abordable reste l'une de nos principales priorités.

Nous avons pris des mesures en gelant pendant un an les tarifs de Manitoba Hydro, protégeant ainsi les ménages contre les augmentations et garantissant aux familles des factures d'énergie stables et prévisibles. À l'heure où de nombreuses juridictions connaissent une hausse des coûts des services publics, les familles du Manitoba 'bénéficient' d'un allègement pendant une année entière, et j'en félicite notre ministre des Finances (DAL Sala).

* (16:40)

Nous avons également permis aux Manitobains de réaliser des économies substantielles à la pompe en rendant permanente la réduction de la taxe provinciale sur l'essence. Cette mesure continue de redonner directement de l'argent aux Manitobains en aidant les

travailleurs à se rendre à leur travail, les parents à conduire leurs enfants à l'école et à leurs activités, et en soutenant les petites entreprises qui dépendent des transports.

Ces mesures associées à notre plan global en matière d'accessibilité financière reflètent un engagement clair : rendre la vie plus abordable, alléger les pressions financières et veiller à ce que chaque Manitobain peut se construire un avenir sûr ici-même.

Nous allons aussi avancer avec l'application des lignes directrices en matière de loyers, afin que les propriétaires soient soumis à des règlements plus stricts avant d'augmenter considérablement les loyers. Notre gouvernement néo-démocrate sait que l'accessibilité financière est une priorité pour les familles du Manitoba. Chaque dollar compte, et trop de Manitobains ont été touchés par la hausse des coûts, en particulier en ce qui concerne les loyers.

Finalement, j'ai été touché la semaine dernière quand nous avons célébré – quand nous avons observé, d'ailleurs, le décès de Louis Riel il y a 140 ans. Et j'étais fier d'être à côté de notre Premier ministre (M. Kinew), ainsi que du Premier ministre du Canada, ainsi que le président de la Fédération métisse du Manitoba pour continuer à préserver la mémoire de Louis Riel.

Les gens à Saint-Boniface sauvent – savent que nous avons une longue historique d'empathie, d'inclusion et de bilinguisme à Saint-Boniface. Nous allons construire – continuer à construire une communauté inclusive, finir les rénovations à l'Hôpital Saint-Boniface, avancer avec d'autres projets d'immobiliers, d'autres projets en éducation, des projets de garderie comme la nouvelle garderie qui va commencer à l'Hôpital de Saint-Boniface avec non moins de 115 places.

Et c'est pour ça que nous 'travons' – travaillons ensemble pour bâtir un Manitoba uni.

Merci, miigwech, ekosani, thank you.

Translation

In terms of Manitoba's Francophone community, we are well on our way to making Manitoba a truly bilingual province.

Over the past six months, we have listened to Francophone communities across Manitoba and will soon share the results of these consultations, as well as the next steps we plan to take to translate these valuable conversations into concrete action.

In December, we will also open new offices in St. Boniface to provide legal services in French and make justice more accessible to families in our community.

We are also taking an important step on the international stage: Manitoba will submit its application to join the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie. This is a celebration of our identity and a way to strengthen our ties with Francophone communities around the world.

Together, we are building a province that reflects our values: solidarity, inclusion and pride in our two official languages.

Finally, when it comes to making life more affordable, our government understands that families feel the cost of living every day. That's why keeping the cost of living affordable remains one of our top priorities.

We took action by freezing Manitoba Hydro rates for one year, protecting households from increases and ensuring families have stable and predictable energy bills. At a time when many jurisdictions are experiencing rising utility costs, Manitoba families are benefiting from a full year of relief, and I commend our Minister of Finance (MLA Sala) for this.

We have also provided Manitobans with substantial savings at the pump by making the provincial gas tax reduction permanent. This measure continues to put money directly back into the pockets of Manitobans by helping workers get to work, parents drive their children to school and activities and supporting small businesses that rely on transportation.

These measures, combined with our comprehensive affordability plan, reflect a clear commitment to making life more affordable, easing financial pressures and ensuring that every Manitoban can build a secure future right here.

We will also move forward with the implementation of rent guidelines, so that landlords are subject to stricter regulations before significantly increasing rents. Our New Democratic government knows that affordability is a priority for Manitoba families. Every dollar counts, and too many Manitobans have been affected by rising costs, particularly when it comes to rent.

Finally, I was touched last week when we celebrated—when we observed, in fact, the 140th anniversary of Louis Riel's death. And I was proud to stand alongside our Premier (Mr. Kinew), as well as the Prime Minister of Canada and the president of the Manitoba Métis

Federation, to continue to preserve the memory of Louis Riel.

The people of St. Boniface know that we have a long history of empathy, inclusion and bilingualism in St. Boniface. We will build—continue to build an inclusive community, finish renovations at St. Boniface Hospital, move forward with other real estate projects, other education projects, daycare projects such as the new daycare that will open at St. Boniface Hospital with no fewer than 115 spaces.

And that's why we're working together to build one Manitoba.

Ms. Jodie Byram (Agassiz): I'm pleased to stand here today and speak into—or, speak in response to the Throne Speech and the amendments that have been put forward by the member from Fort Whyte. And I also want to take a moment and say thank you to the colleagues on this side of the House who have already addressed some of the glaring issues and concerns that have come about in this Throne Speech, addressing many of the concerns we're hearing from our constituents and many more Manitobans.

But before I get to that, I want to start off by stating what a great honour and privilege it is to represent the many constituents of mine in the constituency of Agassiz. I appreciate the hard-working residents and all that they bring to their respective communities. They are all business owners, agriculture producers, manufacturers, professionals, tradespeople and front-line workers, and, of course, the list goes on. And I just want to say thank you to them for their work and their investment in Agassiz, and for adding to Manitoba's economy and the cultural fabric of what makes Manitoba such a beautiful place to live and work.

I appreciate every invite I get from the many different organizations and businesses. I enjoy every community visit; you're always learning something new about the community and the people that reside there. And every event I go to is an opportunity to engage and listen to those concerns and celebrate, as well, the many milestones that we have going on in our constituencies and, again, mine specifically in Agassiz.

I make every effort to help and take time to listen to the people, to learn and to take action wherever I can and help in whatever way I can. And, again, I just want to thank them for their continued support and their encouragement along the way.

I'll start off by saying after hearing and reading through this Throne Speech, I couldn't help but think what we're hearing is the same old rhetoric from this NDP government. It's filled with repeated promises, which isn't unusual, and one of those promises that we've heard from this NDP government for years now is the commitment to fixing health care.

We have heard that for years. This is what this government campaigned on, and, unfortunately, what we're witnessing now is a health-care system that has experienced the worst wait times ever; this province has never seen this before. And much like the campaign promise, they have failed to deliver on substance and transparency. And what we're witnessing now is hospitals being greylisted—two, in fact, in Manitoba—which is just unheard of.

But this exemplifies, yet again, what this government is truly saying. You know, they tell people what they want to hear, but there's really no plan behind that. They just go out and spew their words, but there's no actionable plan to back it up.

I also want to take a moment, while we're on the topic of health care, to acknowledge the remarkable health-care workers that we have in these facilities across our great province. They show up every day—every day—to take care of the people here in Manitoba, and they deserve the utmost respect and recognition, not just here today in this Chamber, but every day. There isn't a day goes by that somebody does not need the care and the help from our health-care professionals.

So thank you to those health-care workers for your unwavering commitment and the care that you provide in all of our communities.

And, again, back to the Throne Speech and how it is filled with health-care promises. But we have seen this before from this government. It's the same old thing. It lacks substance and transparency. The promise—and we've just heard this from members opposite here as well—to eliminate mandatory overtime for staff nurses, in theory, commendable, but it raises questions about how such an initiative can be implemented with the staff shortages that we have here right now. There is no plan laid out that is going to provide or achieve, really, what this goal will be. There's no plan in that—in place for that.

This, again, is coming from a government who campaigned on fixing health care. And again, I'll just say it's in worse shape now than its ever been for years and years.

Highlighting some of the challenges that the health-care workers faced—you know, this mandated overtime—and this is a serious issue for the health-care professionals as well. It impacts the quality of health care, but also produces burnout for these health-care professionals. And we continue to hear from these individuals on the front line, and I'm just going to quote Manitoba Nurses Union president, Darlene Jackson, where she says: We're still in a nursing shortage. And then she went on to add: It's a positive concept, but I don't see where we're at that point right now.

It's also worth noting that the current government promised legislation to end mandatory seven years ago when they were in opposition. That was seven years ago they talked about that. So where have they been on this plan? It just demonstrates, again, that this government talks the talk but fails to deliver on the promises they make.

We heard from president—Dr. Nichelle Desilets, the president of Doctors Manitoba, who expressed concern over the implementation of such changes without the proper consultation. As a doctor—and I'll quote: As a doctor who works in a small town, I'm very sensitive to new rules that can actually compromise keeping our hospital open and keeping those services available. I think a measured balanced approach with gradual implementation and proper consultation is a way to go. It's essential that we engage in that proper consultation, especially in rural—smaller rural communities where the impact of staffing shortages is profoundly felt.

* (16:50)

It's incredible. It's unbelievable. Hospitals are being greylisted. We've seen that at the Health Sciences Centre and the Thompson hospital most recently, as just in the last number of days. And it's not just the health-care issues in this Throne Speech that are concerning. It's equally important to address the glaring omissions that this NDP government forgot—did not mention in their Throne Speech, like omitting support for small businesses, agriculture and industry. There is a glaring silence on essential support for these sectors and especially during economic challenging times with tariffs and such great economic uncertainty. There's no support articulated for local economies or small businesses. And it's those small businesses that are the backbone of our communities.

Agriculture, rural economic development, nothing in the speech promoting that. But I will say what we did see this Premier (Mr. Kinew)—is the Premier going out and promoting US product and totally omitting

local business here that manufactures—grows the grain and produces and manufactures the beer right here in Manitoba. But what we did see is the Premier go out and promote and advertise in a pop-up—new pop-up facility and promote US product. Where is the support in promoting and supporting our economy here in Manitoba? We're not drawing any new business here by doing that either. It contradicts what this NDP government goes out and says.

Where we—in tourism, how are we—how is that being—how is that attracting tourism? Timelines, red tape, high costs, all of this turns business away and any future business.

Let's hit on affordability. This hits many families across our province that go to work every day to support their loved ones and provide the essentials like the basics, groceries, for example. We've heard the Premier tell the media he would drop grocery prices years ago, and that there would be consequences.

But two years later, what has been done? There's nothing done to help those families now. There could've been significant changes made to help support the families in this rising cost of groceries. It's just another broken promise from this Premier. And this government is really out to lunch with the reality of household budgets here in Neepawa.

Families who provide care, love and support for their loved ones living with a disability are left out and ignored in this Throne Speech. There's a lack of any priority for people with disabilities. Many families are already feeling the lack of supports from this NDP government and have been overlooked yet again, whether it be in respite work, child care or needs in health care, to name just a few. There's nothing.

Care and equitable support is crucial for these families and their loved ones, but many of them—with many of them having higher costs just to meet their essential needs. And I've heard from families living with this day in and day out. I've heard from those that cannot access the care they need because they simply can't afford it. This NDP government continues to neglect the needs of those families and folks living with disabilities. There's no enhancing accessibility and equity for these individuals.

The government's promise to listen and engage falls short of addressing the urgent demands for support from these communities. We all saw the disrespect of this Families Minister in the last number of months when she totally disrespected an ASL

interpreter at a public event, blocks emails and even blocks media outlets. When the minister doesn't want to hear from Manitobans, she lashes out and utters profanity and puts up blocks.

This Throne Speech was just another example of how many are feeling ignored and disrespected and blocked from this NDP government.

But one thing we did learn—want to know? When someone shows you who they really are, believe them. And Manitobans believe. They believe this minister has ignored, disrespected and disregarded their pleas. We're seeing this from Abilities Manitoba, and I'm going to quote: We are disappointed to see a lack of priorities for people with disabilities in the Throne Speech. That comes directly from the very people this minister is here to help and support.

You know, families also continue to live in fear in rural Manitoba. Yards and businesses continue to see property crime. Break-ins and drug trafficking are all a growing concern, and I know the member from Brandon West made reference to farmyards in MacGregor being terrorized and broken into, and that's a growing concern and we've seen nothing from this NDP government that can help put boots on the ground in those rural farmyards and protect the many people of rural Manitoba.

Let's talk about addictions and treatment capacity, and I know the member from Portage has been touching on this more specifically today. This is an ongoing crisis in addictions and mental health, and a lot is unaddressed. There is no acknowledgement of the need for increased treatment facilities in this Throne Speech.

The government is announcing a drug consumption site, but there's no details provided to the public regarding this initiative. People are asking many questions; we saw that yesterday as an example, with people showing up at the Legislature, wanting an opportunity to ask questions and have transparency and dialogue regarding this. Has there been full consultation with the community surrounding this? Again, there's so many questions that are left unanswered.

We've seen in the past that announcements come before the plans are developed, and again, we can see

that with this proposed site. It's obviously—it's a typical NDP move. And in this Throne Speech, there is no investment in mental health and rehabilitation. Is there funding allocated for essential resources? There was no mention of this in the Throne Speech. People are suffering, and those in need of rehab and recovery are left hanging.

The question has also come up about the centre, you know, for—the new centre where individuals can be detained for 72 hours. The question is: Where in rural Manitoba will those be centres—will those centres be located? What is the plan, the initiative, with limited resources not just in rural Manitoba, but right across our province? These are issues that exist beyond the city here as well, and how are—what is this NDP government doing to address those concerns?

You know, the neglect, it continues when we are looking at the NDP's recommitment to balance their skewed budget. They reaffirmed their intention to balance the budget by the end of their term. While this sentiment is important and essential, especially in times of the economic uncertainty that we are facing here in Manitoba, you know, at what cost is this going to happen? Balancing the budget should not come at the expense of vital services. Fiscal responsibility is crucial, but it must be accompanied by a commitment to invest in our communities and infrastructure. What plans exist for future investments in Manitoba to attract new business to our province?

I'm just going to wrap it up. I know my time is running short.

Manitobans deserve better, something that addresses pressing issues with seriousness, and they deserve a plan that supports achievable solutions with real results, honourable Deputy Speaker. This Throne Speech is nothing—

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member will have three minutes remaining.

The hour being 5 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. tomorrow.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

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